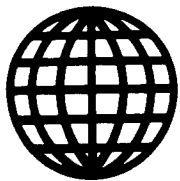


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JPRS Report

Soviet Union

SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES

No 3, May-June 1987

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Soviet Union

Sociological Studies

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Sociological Studies

No 3, May-June 1987

[Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents, the following is a complete translation of the Russian-language bimonthly journal SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE ISSLEDOVANIYA published in Moscow by the Institute of Sociological Research of the USSR Academy of Sciences.]

Sociology in the Context of the Revolutionary Restructuring of Society

18060005a Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 3-11

[Editorial]

[Text] Sociology has an important role to play in the nationwide movement for the restructuring of social life in our country. Its main duties are the scientific substantiation of short- and long-range plans for the development of the social sphere and the scientific regulation of reforms. Marxist sociology has accumulated a tremendous amount of experience in the investigation of concrete problems. The very appearance of the Marxist theory of the social process in the middle of the 19th century signified a break with the contemplative tradition in philosophy and the transfer of sociology to the position of an exact science. Besides this, the birth of Marxist sociology and its related political program marked the birth of a scientific policy reflecting the objective laws of social development.

The Great October Socialist Revolution and the formation of the Soviet state assigned monumental new duties to the science of sociology. It had to establish its own research base and train Marxist research personnel capable of understanding the complex interaction of social forces and securing advancement without losing their political perspective and without losing sight of the final goals.

When V.I. Lenin was defining the functions of the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences in 1918, he felt the need to "assign primary importance to several social research projects"[1]. He was referring to the sociological substantiation of party and state policy. In the second half of the 1920's there were several schools and relatively independent fields of Marxist sociology, such as the sociology of art, science, marriage and the family, cities, youth, military sociology, and so forth. They developed within the channel of historical materialism. Most researchers regarded the latter as the methodology of social cognition and the general sociological theory of Marxism. This dictated the need to concentrate on cardinal problems: the development of the social structure, the convergence of the working class and the peasantry, the effectiveness of ideological work, and so forth. In spite of methodological errors, which were

corrected during the course of extensive debates, sociologists were able to play a significant role in party and state policymaking and in the implementation of policy. Several of the projects of that time, connected with the names of A. Gastev, Ye. Kabo, and S. Strumilin, are now among the most valued possessions of Marxist sociology.

In the second half of the 1930's, however, negative trends were engendered by the Stalin cult of personality and by the more rigid voluntarist, authoritarian methods of national administration. On the level of theory this led to a tendency to equate historical materialism with concrete sociology, the prohibition of empirical research, the supremacy of scholastic theorizing, and dogmatism. The political voluntarism was accompanied by something like theoretical voluntarism, reflected in, for example, Stalin's theory that the class struggle is intensified during the advancement to socialism. The speculative and injurious nature of this thesis was pointed out in the CPSU Central Committee decree "On Surmounting the Cult of Personality and Its Implications" of 30 June 1956[1].

The decisions of the 20th CPSU Congress marked the beginning of a new stage in the development of the socialist society and Marxist sociology. The discussions of the subject and structure of Marxist sociology in the 1960's and 1970's aided in surmounting subjectivism and dogmatism. Empirical research into various spheres of social life was launched on a broad scale, the analytical structure of the "sectorial sociologies" began to take shape, and regular cooperation with foreign scientists was organized. The attempts to equate sociology either with empirical research or with the theory of historical materialism were criticized and surmounted. Through collective effort, the idea of the three levels of Marxist sociology was elaborated and won recognition: general sociological theory, sectorial (or specific) theories, and concrete research. These decades marked the beginning of the revival of sociology in the USSR.

The recognition of achievements did not mean that the creative potential of Marxist-Leninist sociology had been completely realized. There were problems of an external, extrasociological, and internal nature. The former included the mistrust of sociology by many administrators and their inability to make the best use of the possibilities it offered. The causes were rooted in the remaining traces of the old authoritarian style of management, which created the illusion that reforms were a simple and easy matter. Many sociologists, in turn, adopted the stereotypical style of political thinking and deftly adapted analytical schemes and empirical data to fit the latest slogan. All of this discredited the science by diminishing its prestige even more. Obviously, sociology could not play the role it had been assigned by the classic Marxist-Leninist tradition—it could not serve as the basis for political decisionmaking and as a means of controlling their implementation.

Besides this, there was a lack of progress in the science itself. The main reasons for the underdevelopment of the social sciences were listed in M.S. Gorbachev's speech at the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum: the tendency to ignore contradictions in social development, the obsolete nature of analytical schemes, the absolutization of existing forms of social organization and a tendency to equate them with salient features of socialism, the abstract nature of theoretical constructs, and their inability to reflect the actual dialectics of social processes [12, p 8]. All of this concerned the key problems of the Soviet society's development: the social structure, class and interethnic relations, questions of labor and consumption, cooperation, economic and political organization, ideological relations, the social aspects of indoctrination, education, public health, and so forth.

"The situation on the theoretical front," M.S. Gorbachev said, "has had a negative effect on the efforts to solve actual problems" [12]. In this way, a faulty mechanism of the interaction of science and practice, a mechanism of their mutual deceleration, was taking shape for a long time. The theoretical and organizational achievements of the science were not being employed in the practice of social management. Practice, in turn, could not stimulate constructive scientific analysis and the advancement of new ideas. All of this signified the neglect of the principles embodied in the classic works of Marxism-Leninism and a departure from the traditional channels in which Marxist sociology had achieved great successes.

After the situation in the social sciences had been subjected to pointed and impartial criticism, the party assigned scientists the difficult but gratifying task of restoring the prestige of the Marxist social sciences and making a major contribution to the nationwide reform movement. Ways of surmounting the retardation the society had experienced in recent decades were considered first. "The roots of this retardation," a speaker at the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum said, "can be found in the serious flaws in the functioning of the institutions of socialist democracy, the outdated and sometimes unrealistic political and theoretical aims, and the conservative mechanism of administration" [12, p 10]. The elements of the "retardation mechanism" warrant more detailed discussion.

The issue of the administrative mechanism (and the closely related issue of administrative style) is of primary significance. The importance of this matter was underscored in V.I. Lenin's works of 1922-1923, which became his last testament. Lenin stressed that the administrative system the young Soviet state had inherited from tsarism had not been completely reorganized for several reasons (the civil war, the lack of funds, and the shortage of personnel). After the party had destroyed the old forms of bourgeois authority and laid the foundation for a new type of state, it had not had enough time for the radical improvement of the administrative system. For this reason, Lenin repeatedly said that a political coup

had to be "digested and put into practice" [2]. He regarded this as a long-term, serious job requiring tremendous effort. "I am aware that bureaucracy is a serious problem," Lenin said, "but we did not include its destruction as an objective in our party program. This is not a congress issue; it is an issue of this entire era" [3].

In his last works Lenin stipulated an entire series of practical measures which would be required to bring the administrative structure in line with the aims and objectives of the socialist state and the socialist economy. Far from all of them, however, were attained.

Administrative methods were another extremely serious matter. Lenin saw one of the dangers in what he called "com-swaggering"—i.e., the transfer of the commanding-authoritarian or even repressive methods of administration (which were necessary and unavoidable during the period of civil war and military communism) to the conditions of peaceful socialist construction. Administration by mere injunction was more and more likely to "replace" economic, organizational, and indoctrinational methods. This deviation was justified by the "good intentions" and personal integrity of administrators who were absolutely loyal to the cause of socialist construction (even though the results of their activity were disastrous) and by the monumental tasks they faced.

The overdramatization of the sociopolitical situation in the country, the practice known as the dispossession of the kulaks, and the mass-scale repression, stimulating the reinforcement and consolidation of the authoritarian style of administration, played a tremendous and, one could say, tragic role after Lenin's death and especially in the 1930's. This style, in spite of the efforts to change it in the 1950's, has still not been surmounted.

Today we must acknowledge the de facto emergence of a socialist bureaucracy—an entire stratum of irresponsible functionaries who either stay locked up in their shells or take over all of the functions of democratic institutions. It is not uncommon for a person to assume an elective office without an election and for decisions to be replaced by "orders from above," which cannot be questioned or doubted because they are backed up by the authority of party and state—and essentially democratic—organs. There is a giant discrepancy between the democratic structure and the bureaucratic style of administration.

The danger of this has been acknowledged. It must be said that it is even exaggerated at times. In a number of recent publications, for example, bureaucracy is viewed as the mortal enemy of the socialist state, its features are demonized, and it becomes a "thing in itself"—something bad and unmanageable that must be destroyed. Here it is important not to go too far. Given the present state of the industrial and social system, bureaucracy is needed as an administrative tool, as a means of regulating and coordinating diverse impulses and influences.

Furthermore, it should embody the "principle of caution" in society and take the unforeseen consequences of decisions into account. Under the conditions of authoritarian administration, however, these functions are absolutized and deformed, and decisions are made without consideration for the actual state of affairs. Authority is "delegated" to bureaucratic bodies, which acquire power but are relieved of responsibility to the society.

We must admit that people did not pay attention to many of V.I. Lenin's warnings and demands with regard to this. During the first years of Soviet rule Lenin was already demanding that strict measures be taken against bureaucrats whose performance had been unsatisfactory from the standpoint of the public interest[4] and wrote about the need to establish the legal bases of the responsibility of personnel, especially communists[5]. From an interview with a deputy procurator general of the USSR, however, we learn that methods of judicial control and forms of accountability are still effectively lacking in the sphere where the most important social and national economic decisions are made[13].

It goes without saying that jurists and government personnel are doing much in this field, but the restructuring of the bureaucratic system and its transformation into a means of effective economic and social management cannot be accomplished without the participation of sociologists, the serious investigation of these matters, and the elaboration of a sociological theory of socialist administration.

Lenin regarded the issue of the creation of a democratic social order as a cardinal problem in the construction of socialism. In his "Letter to the Congress," he refers directly to measures for the democratization of the party leadership as changes in our political order[6]. Nevertheless, after Lenin's death the existing administrative mechanisms were "put in reserve" and lost their democratic content. Democracy was demagogically contrasted to discipline and organization. The Leninist dialectical tradition of bringing these forms of activity into alignment no longer existed.

"Unity of action and freedom of discussion and criticism," Lenin wrote in 1906, "—this is our decision.... The strength of the working class lies in organization. Without organization, the proletarian masses are nothing. Organized, they are everything. Organization is unity of action and unity of performance. Obviously, however, any action and any kind of performance is of value only when and if it moves ahead and not backward—if it unites the proletariat ideologically and elevates it, and does not depreciate, corrupt, or weaken it. Organization without an ideology is meaningless and turns workers into pitiful toadies of the bourgeois powers that be. For this reason, the proletariat does not recognize unity of action unless it is combined with freedom of discussion and criticism"[7].

After October, Lenin called for the mobilization of millions of laborers for political action and demanded the unconditional observance of both of the "constituent" principles of democratic centralism. Discipline and organization in the execution of decisions are meaningful only when the latter are discussed and accepted through democratic channels.

The characteristic reliance on the authoritarian style of administration, exercised through the bureaucratic system, in subsequent decades signified an effective disregard for Leninist principles. In the 1970's we already knew what "organization without an ideology" was and we knew that it could have a corrupting and demoralizing effect on the society. Organization without an ideology gradually leads to disorganization, and discipline without ideology turns people into cogs in the bureaucratic machine. People retain their "own opinions," but these opinions do not combine to make up a public opinion capable of influencing the process of social development.

There is no simple or single solution to the problem of democratization or to the problem of developing an appropriate mechanism and style of administration. Resorting to a paradox, we could say that it cannot be solved through democratic channels. When democracy is taken to its logical limits, it evolves into something like "collective voluntarism," in which the truth is not revealed or disclosed by social reality but is prescribed, so to speak, or decreed by a majority vote. Democratic administration can encounter the same problems as bureaucratic administration—the practice of administration can conflict sharply with the demands of reality. Past experience has shown us that this kind of thoughtless democracy becomes a phase which is followed logically by a transition to bureaucratic, repressive, and authoritarian methods.

It was no coincidence that Lenin always spoke of democracy and discipline, democracy and centralism, freedom of critical discussion and unity of action. During the period when the style and methods of public administration were being elaborated, he wrote that it would be necessary to learn how to "hold discussions in such a way as to avoid confusing...what must be discussed with what must be administered. Hold discussions, but administer without the slightest hesitation.... Otherwise, you will not triumph"[8]. Work must be organized in such a way as to "avoid delays, resolve disputes as soon as they come up, and not isolate administration from policy"[9]. The latter is especially important. Otherwise, administration will give rise to "meaningless organization without ideology" (Lenin).

The general principles Lenin formulated must be made more specific from the standpoint of the requirements of their implementation during the current stage of social development: Above all, the competence of democratic organs and the administrative system must be delineated. The delineation should depend on the level of

professional knowledge and ability needed for the resolution of specific problems. To avoid confusing knowledge with the skills of bureaucratic administration, administrative personnel will have to be given a sounder background in sociology. It is no secret that a sound sociological background has frequently been replaced in recent years by so-called political maturity, interpreted as the willingness to accept the prevailing line of reasoning without argument. We should quickly rid ourselves of this kind of maturity. Competence, conviction, responsibility, and a thorough knowledge of the situation, and not adaptation, guarantee the political effectiveness of administrative decisions.

Obviously, the sociological education of personnel cannot be confined to our science's contribution to the elimination of the retarding mechanism. When the response to party measures is covert but stubborn resistance, this is far from always the result of insufficient knowledge, conservative thinking, an inability to climb out of a rut, or the incapability of deviating from the routine. It is usually a conscious reluctance to give up the advantages of the traditional structure of relations. The absence of new personnel also plays a significant role in delaying reorganization, and this is completely understandable in view of the fact that the system for the formation of an administrative staff put an emphasis on the authoritarian style of administration for decades, and it was in accordance with this that the administrative structure took shape.

Organizational restructuring, a change in administrative style, and the democratization of administration represent a "conditio sine qua non" of successful advancement in all spheres of our life, including the science of sociology. We must not forget, however, that sociology is the object as well as the subject of restructuring. Speakers at the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum said that outdated and sometimes unrealistic theoretical aims are part of the retarding mechanism. Shortcomings in the interpretation of social reality were engendered by the incorrect organization of the activities of sociologists, a weak connection with practice, and the absence of a view of society focusing on social problems.

Traditionally, and quite accurately, Marxist sociology has been thought of as performing three functions: ideological, cognitive, and practical. The healthy development of the science should entail all three combined. In reality, however, sociology has often been concerned less with revealing existing contradictions than with concealing them, in the belief that this constitutes the performance of the main—ideological—function of the science. This vulgarized view of ideological aims led to a situation in which the practical role of sociology was paralyzed and in which the absence of a connection with practice either caused the stagnation of theory or gave rise to phantoms with no other purpose than the substantiation of officially expressed points of view. The ideological function itself also suffered, because ideology was isolated from the comprehension of developing social

reality and practical transforming activity. This situation was resolutely criticized at the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum.

Now, under the conditions of restructuring, priority is being assigned to the practical function of sociology, to which the function of sociological education is being added. Obviously, it would be ridiculous to assume that the cognitive and ideological functions are disappearing. The completion of the tasks facing sociology would be absolutely impossible without the investigation of actual social processes. The ideological function will be performed during the process of the theoretical interpretation and practical resolution of problems in the improvement of the socialist society. Today, however, sociology can no longer engage only in the accumulation of knowledge: Results must be immediate, and for this reason it will be necessary to work and learn at the same time. Propaganda should become primarily propaganda of action.

The talk about functions might seem scholastic, similar to the discussions of the subject and structure of Marxist sociology that dragged on for decades. Nevertheless, the "functional" definition of sociology is needed for the self-identification of the discipline as a whole and of each of its individual representatives. Without this, it would be difficult to seriously discuss the performance of urgent tasks.

The assignment of priority to the practical—or, more precisely, the social-engineering—functions of sociology should result in its self-assertion as a profession and a field of science. Up to this time sociology has often been assessed according to criteria that are not organically inherent in it. For example, whereas sociology was interpreted primarily as a field of philosophy, the sociologist's attempts to theorize were not regarded as efforts to resolve basic philosophical issues. People lost sight of the fact that the question had to be formulated on a different level of abstraction and that this kind of "elevation" would make the science sterile and inhibit the development of meaningful approaches. Complaints about positivism and so forth were formulated in the same manner—without consideration for the actual purpose of the science and the corresponding level of generalization.

Obviously, it would be wrong to go to the other extreme and to equate sociology with a philosophically neutral technical field of science. The philosophical outlook of the Marxist sociologist is revealed primarily in his choice, discussion, and interpretation of topics from the standpoint of the successful development of the socialist society. Besides this, the sociologist must have the ability of sociophilosophical reflection to see all of the diverse facets of a problem. But the replacement (whether overt or covert) of sociology with philosophy would signify the loss of the distinctive features of its approach.

The self-assertion of the field should clarify the professional status of the sociologist working within the framework of academic science and the plant sociologist. There is a lack of clarity here, and the result has been violations of the ethics and methodological principles of sociological activity and a variety of expansive promises and irresponsible and sensational recommendations. The "opinions of sociologists" are regularly expressed in the press and are backed up only by the academic title of the authors rather than by theoretical arguments or empirical data. Sociologists are not accountable for the results of their work (including financial results), there is no system to oversee the incorporation of research findings, and no legal or economic standards have been developed to regulate intervention by scientists in social processes. All of this has an adverse effect on the status of the sociologist, who is sometimes comparable to a dilettante or an amateur operating at his own fear and risk, and on the objectivity and scientific validity of research findings. Representatives of soviet, economic, and administrative organs feel justified in interfering in the sociologist's activity at any stage of his work, and this naturally complicates the work and impedes the collection of objective information.

Only the unequivocal disclosure of professional status, regulated by the appropriate standard documents, will give the sociologist the independence that can guarantee the objectivity of his research findings. The political role of the sociologist in the socialist society is extremely important, but we must remember that it is exercised through different channels than the political role of administrators or party and soviet personnel, namely through his methodological position, which imposes certain obligations and restrictions on him. This independence, however, must be accompanied by higher demands on the sociologist himself and on his professional competence and his political and ethical qualities.

The "status identification" of the sociologist can aid in the establishment of the proper relations with foreign scientists. The difficult conditions of sociology's existence in our country led to a situation in which research methods were elaborated almost exclusively in the West. They were adopted in virtually their final form in the 1960's and 1970's. The borrowing of research tools was accompanied by the active criticism of the general theoretical and methodological principles and specific sociological theories of Western sociologists. This criticism often was and is oversimplified, and this is quite natural because it is indulged in by people other than sociologists. The criticism is essentially only of an ideological nature. It is supposed to prove that the criticized author's outlook is idealistic (which he does not deny) or non-Marxist (which he does not conceal). On this basis, the author is refuted outright. It is true that there are occasional reservations with regard to the "rational core" and so forth, but this does not change the overall assessment. Those who specialize in the criticism have

preferred not to delve any deeper—to the level of concrete social facts and interpretations. The tendency to take a closer look at the essence of the matter became apparent just recently.

The need for the systematic critical analysis of bourgeois sociology is indisputable, but we must decide the exact point at which this kind of criticism ceases to be helpful and becomes harmful. Its propagandistic function should not obscure its cognitive function. The field of research known as criticism of bourgeois sociology should also acquaint our scientific community with the current problems and actual achievements of Western sociology. Here we should pay attention to Lenin's recommendations. He said that we should take a lesson from the West in the areas where it is indisputably ahead of us. Obviously, it would be best for practicing researchers to regularly look into the works of their Western colleagues, but this becomes an academic matter when the linguistic abilities of sociologists are inadequate and when access to information—with the exception of Moscow and some other centers—is extremely limited.

The methodological and theoretical self-assertion of sociology and the professionalization of sociological work will allow our science to assume the prominent place it has been assigned by the very logic of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the relationship between social cognition and social reality. Many steps have already been taken in this direction, and a great deal of theoretical and practical experience has been accumulated, but now scientists must make a new effort. Experience tells us that we must work instead of relying on the natural course of events. Here there are many problems. For example, in the majority of sociological establishments, including head institutes and the organizational and administrative structure, the style of activity and personnel policy are still the same. Everyone now knows that old methods cannot be used to solve new problems, but this awareness has not led to changes in forms and procedures of activity yet. It is not enough to concentrate on the resolution of new problems, because the problems themselves have not been defined or theoretically formulated as yet. The "restructuring" to date has been confined to a reshuffling of the old topics which have been studied for decades and to the assignment of new or different titles to these research projects.

Marxist-Leninist sociology has provided remarkable examples of conscientious adherence to ideological principles, irreproachable ethics, and the ability to keep up with quickly developing social processes, discuss the most vital issues in pointed and uncompromising terms, and investigate them with the aid of the greatest variety of methods accessible to science. At the same time, past experience tells us to be wary of anything that diminishes the effectiveness of sociology and precludes the realization of its scientific potential. We must be fully aware that the objective and serious analysis of shortcomings and errors does not in any way signify a tendency to belittle or ignore achievements and successes. This phase

must precede new and more sweeping advances. In 1922 V.I. Lenin wrote: "The main thing now is not to give up earlier gains. We will not give up a single one of our earlier gains. At the same time, we are facing an absolutely new problem; earlier practices could turn out to be an unmitigated obstacle"[10]. Lenin's remarks should serve sociologists as a guide in their future work. Their main objective should consist in learning from the initial experience of restructuring while keeping up with nationwide advances and with today's aims.

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8588

The Problem of Fairness

18060005b Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 12-23

[Article by Nina Fedorovna Naumova, candidate of philosophical sciences and laboratory chief at the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of Systems Analysis, and Vadim Zakharovich Rogovin, doctor of philosophical sciences and senior research associate at the Institute of Sociological Research, USSR Academy of Sciences]

[Text] For 2 years (1985-1986) the issue of social justice and unearned income was debated on the pages of *Komsomolskaya pravda*, and the authors of this article took part in the debate. The hundreds of letters the editors received in response to the discussion provide rich food for thought. They do not reflect the quantitative features of any kind of general sample group, but they do exhibit the qualitative patterns and "phenomenology" of standard opinion, including the common "social theories" influencing this opinion. We know from experience that public discussion of such vital issues as fairness gives rise to a broad range of opinions and that elements of civic-mindedness or even state-mindedness will be found here. In addition, the letters reveal how difficult it is for the individual to develop the ability to be fair and how easily he loses this ability when his material comfort is at stake. Sociology must contribute to the development of this ability as a key element of social morality. Otherwise, it cannot hope to perform its important social function of "developing a social way of thinking in people"[3]. There is no question that it is hard to be fair, because simple adherence to the norm is not enough: An unerring sense of propriety and responsibility is also essential. Neither conformity nor even kindness can be enough.

A sense of fairness is not a natural instinct. It is a social product, and it must be instilled and then constantly "exercised." It is tested by life, which does not always present us with pleasant choices. It also presents us with choices like the one discussed in the article "Inheritance," about the need to offer all young people comparable initial opportunities. It was in this context that questions were raised about the fairness of inheriting large fortunes, which make these opportunities unequal.

There is an important distinction between the individual's concern about fairness for himself and for those close to him and his concern about fairness for the entire society, for others, for those "far removed" from him. This is closely related to another key feature—the individual's attitude toward equality, toward the need to

guarantee all people equal social opportunities and the kind of living conditions all human beings deserve. Finally, another important factor is the individual's degree of "sensitivity" to social contrasts, his ability to act independently of them and to judge his own social status by the laws of fairness, and not simply by the criteria of "worse" or "better."

How do the authors of the letters feel that the "problem of fairness" should be solved?

A desire for justice for all and concern for the common good, and not just for one's own welfare, are expressed in many letters. A worker from Kremenchug writes about how the desire for justice comes into being.

"To raise us, our father had to work every day, without ever taking any days off or vacations. I did not know how hard life was for my father until I became a father myself.... I began working when I was 16.... I always try to do a good job and to fulfill the plan conscientiously. This is my guiding principle: The richer our motherland is, the richer we will be. I want my son to feel the same way."

This is the point of view of the man of labor. It came into being at the same time as the labor movement and was formulated by its leaders as "advancing with the ranks, and not out of the ranks."

A retired worker from Leningrad, N.I. Smirnov, writes about the same thing. He stresses that "the improvement of life must be accomplished by enhancing primarily the welfare of the group, because 'getting rich alone' might not have any effect on the person who gets rich but it will affect his progeny and influence their way of thinking." But the main thing is that he will "not be moving in the direction of the goals for which the country is improving the life of the people."

Genuine collective labor means that each person forms personal relationships based on respect for the interests of each individual and of the group as a whole. The standards and values of fairness play a significant regulating role in these relationships because they mean that not only the labor the individual contributed today will be taken into account, but also his usual degree of conscientiousness and qualifications, his family obligations, the state of his health, and much more. Furthermore, conscientious—i.e., intensive—labor makes the individual suspicious of sources of large fortunes and, consequently, gives him a negative attitude toward excessive social inequality. "Do you know what a 'Zhi-guli' means?" V.I. Petrenko from Donetsk asks, "It means saving half of your salary of 200 rubles a month for 10 years." A labor veteran from Shakhta also writes about this: "I was a longwall miner, and we and the drift miners earned more than anyone else, but not every miner has a car."

Many of the letters said that the material welfare of the society had been enhanced in recent years, but the actual equality of its members had been reduced, mainly by violations of the principle of payment according to labor. The enhancement of public welfare will continue, but what will this mean in terms of social stratification? "Sizeable differences in the level of material comforts (regardless of their causes) are socially dangerous," writes A.S. Bron, the editor of a plant newspaper (in Bryansk).

Many readers—parents and teachers—realize that these "differences" can give rise to an uncontrollable process of social comparisons and contrasts, against which the young are defenseless. Pedagogues are particularly worried. "Sometimes I could just cry," writes B.S. Kogudayev (from Sapozhok in Ryazan Oblast), who has been a teacher for 25 years, "when I see how a 'little prince' of 13 or 14 with a Japanese tape recorder, cassettes, and a lot of pocket money can break the spirit of the children who come into contact with him."

It is precisely the differences in family living conditions that give some parents an insurmountable desire to pass their social privileges on to their children, and not only in the form of financial bequests but also in the form of a prestigious education and place of employment. It is understandable that they think of this as a completely fair and natural desire. But many readers do not agree. They condemn it as protectionism and feel that it is more dangerous than financial inequality itself. Comrade Pronkevich (from Cheboksary) made a reference to the *Komsomolskaya pravda* article "Pulling Rank To Pass the Test" in this context: "The poorest student, an outright loafer, told his classmates who were studying for a test: 'You go ahead and read while I take a rest, and tomorrow I will tell the teacher who my father is and he will give me a good grade.'"

Protectionism is always to the detriment of others. Parents who are "unconcerned" are frequently described as bad or even irresponsible parents. In fact, it might be that they just do not want their children to enjoy any prosperity and success that has been stolen from others or it might be the realization that a family living on a normal worker's wages cannot withstand the competition for admission to a prestigious VUZ or organization. This is realized by parents and by children. A young man of 17 from Smolensk Oblast writes:

"I cannot understand why the newspapers have recently been justifying something that should be considered immoral in the socialist society.... Just think of all the articles about tutors. *Uchitelskaya gazeta* even praised the tutor San Sanych. He charges 600 rubles for his services. But who can afford this? Who? Why, the same people who wear American jeans. They will pay this amount, and not just to one tutor, and they will attend prestigious VUZ's.... I get A's in everything but German (a B). I would like to attend a medical VUZ but I know I will not. I did not have a tutor. Where would I get more

money than anyone in my family has ever seen? And why, pray tell, is there such a big difference between school and VUZ requirements? It exists so that only those who have been trained by candidates of sciences will apply for admission."

Judging by the letters, many parents are faced with a difficult "sociological" task: They must explain to their children why there are differences in financial status that have nothing to do with differences in labor contributions. In essence, this is not a question parents should have to deal with, but they are the ones who have to answer it. Any lack of principle in their attitude toward matters of social justice is noticed by their children and costs them a great deal. After all, it is not only the contemplation of unearned luxuries that causes children to accuse their parents of being "impractical" or of "not knowing how to live." The letters show how parents unconsciously lay the basis for these accusations by displaying their inadequate social maturity and responsibility to their children. This can take many forms. It could be an attempt to conceal or justify shortcomings in the distribution of wealth in our society, or, conversely, an attempt to portray these shortcomings as the rule in social life ("This is how it has always been, and this is how it will always be" or "Everyone looks out for himself"). It can also take the form of an attempt to portray oneself as an exceptional, unique person ("Everyone cheats; I am the only one stupid enough to be honest"). Any one of these positions can be refuted easily with the aid of fairly obvious facts, especially by today's teenagers, who can see everything if they want to and who are capable of logical thought. Then the children can see these points of view as lame excuses for their parents' dishonesty or lack of success.

This is precisely how children usually become alienated from their parents. "The article 'Inheritance' was published at just the right time," writes V. Frolova (Dzhambul, Kazakh SSR). "I made my daughter, a student, read it right away. She is always accusing me of 'not knowing how to live' because I cannot buy her a tape recorder or a color TV or send her abroad. One of her classmates has a happy and carefree life, although her poor academic performance has put her on the verge of failure." As we can see, the author of this letter backs up her own point of view with an—i.e., with someone else's point of view. Other parents took a more serious approach. "When our children told us that their classmates had received this or that from their parents," V. Lolenko from Molodogvardeysk tells us, "my husband and I would show them our family budget to prove to them that we cannot afford such expensive things. Our children understood, and we had no more discussions of that kind, but they now stay home all the time because they do not have stylish clothes: They are ridiculed by the children 'who know how to live,' but we are glad that they have not lost their dignity."

It is not surprising that these children "now stay home all the time": Their parents' arguments were not convincing

enough; they did not give their children any real self-confidence. Arguments of this kind are weak because they try to explain the problem of fairness exclusively with the aid of social comparisons. These comparisons alone, however, can lead only to an inferiority complex or to haughty arrogance.

This reduces the entire issue of social justice to a "personal" or individual problem, to an individual's worries about whether he (or his social group) is living better or worse than others. This is the first step in the departure from the collectivist interpretation of fairness, based on the desire for social equality, to the individualistic interpretation. It is based on a desire for advantages and privileges and is ultimately unfair to others under certain circumstances. But this is not always obvious to everyone.

The differences between the collectivist and individualistic interpretations of fairness, their conflict, and their incompatibility are most apparent in attitudes toward inheritance. Everyone knows that the size of an individual's inheritance affects the conditions of his life from the very beginning. If we believe that it is fair for all children and young people, who have still not done anything for or against the society, to have equal social opportunities, then the material conditions of their life should be comparable from the very beginning. Even those who do not agree with this would hardly think it would be fair to have a race in which some of the runners start the race 100 meters from the finish line, in running shoes and on a paved road, while others start from a kilometer away, barefoot and on rocks. This means that differences in inheritances should not be too great either, and that they should be subject to adjustment.

Most of the readers who sent letters to the newspaper in response to the article were in favor of this kind of regulation. A.G. Nekrasov (Stupino, Vladimir Oblast) writes:

"Young children who still do not know anything about work are already enjoying comforts that cost a worker more than a year of sweat (if he wants, for example, a car or something of that sort). What will happen to the young people who are housed, clothed, and set up for life? I think that they will never serve the state as full-fledged (honest and conscientious) workers. And this substratum is becoming more noticeable all the time. The process will apparently continue until we achieve social justice in matters of inheritance. The many parents who deny their own needs so that they can leave inheritances are inflicting great injury on the country by corrupting their children."

"For most of us the issue of inheritance seems somehow cosmic or otherworldly," the members of a geological party in Alma-Ata remark. The authors of this letter also acknowledge, however, that this is an acute problem because "the individual's standard of living still does not always depend on the quality of his work.... Inequality

begins in school. We see it every day on the street and read about it in the newspaper. The result is the displacement of values at the very age when the individual's attitude toward life is taking shape. This, it seems to us, should be the starting point. Equal conditions for children should be created in childhood and should be sustained at any cost."

Many readers direct attention to the "mechanism" contributing to the creation of differences in unearned property. Sociologists associate it with the existence of "accumulated advantages"—i.e., the kind of social advantages that have the power to accumulate in line with the principle that "money attracts money."

"Some people get everything they want without any effort, without wasting any energy, without any difficulty in carrying out their plans—they have very wealthy parents," writes a reader from Omsk. "Others have to work for everything all their lives and start out with almost nothing.... I realize that there are different salaries for different occupations, but over the years the differences between the incomes and the accumulated wealth of the former and the latter become quite appreciable."

Some people feel that this problem can be solved through the direct redistribution of the accumulated material advantages bequeathed unfairly to an heir, because he did not even "accumulate" them, much less earn them. For example, I.G. Sheshunov (Shakhta, Rostov Oblast) feels that this issue should be examined in close connection with such acute social problems as the housing shortage and the low income of some population groups.

The tone of most of the letters indicated, however, that people do not simply want to equalize all family income completely, and they certainly do not want to simply take money away from some and give it to others. They are concerned about the just implementation of state redistribution policy and about social problems requiring substantial economic resources for their resolution. Most of the authors agree that the institution of inheritance should not be abolished in our country, but limits should be set on the largest bequests, such as those which allow the heir to live on the interest from inherited savings.

"What each person owns should be earned through honest labor, and inheritances should certainly stay within reasonable limits," writes I.V. Zheludova from Moscow.

How do readers define these "reasonable limits"? We know that many sociologists and economists feel that this is invalid and assert that it is impossible and even impermissible to categorize any demands, accumulations, and so forth as "reasonable" or "excessive." Many readers, however, suggest a simple and satisfying, in our opinion, method of solving the problem—calculating how much a highly skilled worker in a mass profession

can earn honestly in his career and then using this sum as a "point of departure," or something like a social income standard. It is interesting that most of the readers who tried to compute this sum arrived at the same figure. This kind of "point of departure" is also suggested in D. Kazutin's article "Unearned Income"[4]. When the journalist and Hero of Socialist Labor V.S. Koptev, a steel worker, tried to figure out how much the latter had earned in his 30 years of work, it turned out that the total monetary compensation was just over 100,000 rubles. Is it fair, some readers ask, for a person to start out in life with money and goods equal to at least half or a third of what a hero of labor has earned throughout his career?

Although most readers agree that the initial conditions of life should be equalized, they do not mean that all young people should start out in life with absolutely nothing. Many even support the following point of view: "How can a person have any incentive to work if he knows that his children will have to start out in life with nothing? It would be better to eat, drink, and be merry! People will have a negative response to this and will seek ways of getting around the law so that their earnings do not go to strangers." A perfect response to these arguments is provided by V.I. Golovanov (Moscow):

Can we say that a person works only for himself and his relatives? And can we say that children start out in life with nothing when they live in an apartment with all of the conveniences, receive a free education, are clothed, and are lucky enough not to know what hunger is? If all of this is "nothing," then the principles of their upbringing are a mystery. If young people start out in life with what their parents have earned, then everyone will have a different start in life. Some will have their own cars, savings accounts, and extremely expensive possessions. In other words, some will have what they have not earned. Others will be envious and dissatisfied—not with themselves, but with their parents, who 'do not know how to live well.' Under these conditions it will be hard to encourage people to work, and not all parents will be able to cope with this difficult problem. It is wrong, dear parents, to save everything, even for the sake of your children, because you could unwittingly ruin their lives."

The letters reveal that the individualistic interpretation of fairness takes only the interests of one family into account, and primarily the parents' attitude toward their children. The only criterion of fairness here is the parents' desire to offer their children the best possible social opportunities. From this vantage point, social inequality, including unequal initial conditions of life for young people, would seem to be unavoidable.

It is precisely here that the line can be drawn between the collectivist and individualistic interpretations of fairness. This fundamental difference has many implications.

First of all, people who are concerned about fairness only for themselves and their relatives usually object to the society's attempts to establish good living conditions for everyone—i.e., to compensate for unjustified and undeserved deprivations through redistribution, either with the aid of public consumption funds or with a progressive inheritance tax. It seems obvious that state aid to young couples and large families is an essential condition for social justice. Some of the readers who responded, however, called this aid harmful and unnecessary "charity." Here is what the author of an anonymous letter from Leningrad says:

"The partners in one young couple are the sole heirs. The partners in another have lots of sisters and brothers, and it would be impossible to buy each a home and a summer home. I wonder why this beggary is encouraged and why people insist that large families should be given material assistance or why state subsidies should be awarded to families simply because income per family members is low."

Some of the supporters of this point of view call social assistance to low-income families "unearned income" or "extortion." Of course, by the laws of our state, payments and benefits from public consumption funds are earned income, but the categorization of privileges for low-income families as unearned income is fully within the bounds of the interpretation of "family" justice in high-income families.

The attitude of the supporters of "individual" justice toward the policy of redistribution and toward public consumption funds is quite inconsistent. When the socialist state institutes new social guarantees and benefits (such as larger pensions or aid to families with children), these people are eager to make use of them and regard them as something natural and absolutely reasonable. But after all, this is also a case of the redistribution of the gross social product. When, on the other hand, the material privileges of the young people closest to them might be restricted or redistributed in favor of equally deserving young people, who cannot be blamed because their parents were less healthy, strong, energetic, or enterprising, or even less willing to work, these people say that the practice is impermissible or unfair. In other words, if social redistribution benefits them, it is fair; if it benefits someone else, it is unfair. If this is the case, then how does fairness differ from a thirst for personal advantages?

In the second place, the individualistic interpretation of fairness leads to the view that unequal social opportunities for young are not only unavoidable but also warranted, just, and necessary.

"Why should my children have the same kind of life as the children of drunks and loafers?" This typical question clearly indicates the mentality and logic of individual, "family fairness." This argument seems irrefutable to anyone who has forgotten that children do not choose

their parents or teach them how to behave and that it is not fair to punish a person for having bad parents or reward him for having good ones. We are justified in rephrasing the question and asking why the children of a loafer or a drunk should have a worse life than others of their age. After all, fate has already punished them and it is possible that they have inherited poor health, bad habits, and a lack of help in their education and their lives.

The position of the supporters of inequality is not very persuasive and, as is often the case, an even less persuasive argument is used to reinforce it: "The children of drunks and loafers are just like their parents." It would not do anyone any good, however, to take this argument seriously.

No, nature is more merciful than the supporters of "family fairness." It does not always pass every trait on to every member of the next generation. It gives many people the kind of chance they are sometimes denied by others. This is also what our society does, striving to alleviate natural and, what is most important, social ills, so that no one will be denied a chance for success and development, so that the material welfare of people will depend on their own labor effort rather than on circumstances.

The objections to equal opportunities might conceal the fear that the consistent implementation of this principle will make it difficult for people to retain social privileges and pass them on to their children. The authors of some letters feel it is extremely important not only to divide people into the poor and unfortunate and the rich and fortunate but also to be certain that this division is lawful and eternal. This is discussed by 30-year-old I. Dobrynin (Kiev):

"I remember a conversation I had with one of my friends about inheritance. At that time he said: 'Whoever has lived a good life will continue to do so, and whoever has "meandered along" in life will keep on doing that.'"

A letter from hydraulic engineer V.V. Feklin (Saratov) can serve as a good response, in our opinion, to this kind of "social philosophy":

"I am a member of the wartime generation and I have vivid memories of the postwar hardships. Differences in income meant that a boy from a wealthy family who ate white bread could force us undernourished boys to carry him on our backs for a piece of bread. Therefore, the equalization of the financial security of families, a process which has just begun and which only affects young people at this time, is a matter of statewide importance."

An aggressive position with regard to equality can also come into being when a "lucky accident of birth" gives a young person intellectual, informational, and cultural advantages as well as material advantages. Candidate of Technical Sciences B.N. Kozak (Moscow) writes:

"As soon as I reached the sixth grade my parents began hiring teachers for me and they worked with me in English and German. Of course, we had to be wealthy to be able to afford this in the early 1950's. It was from them that I inherited my aptitude for the exact sciences, and this is how I ended up in one of our country's most prestigious VUZ's. But now I wonder whether it might have been better if all of the languages and physics and mathematics had been beaten out of me at the end of the tenth grade so that I could be just like all of the envious simpletons."

The "envious simpletons" are apparently those whose parents could not afford such luxuries or pass on an "aptitude for the exact sciences." How easily feelings of unlimited superiority come into being when the majority of one's potential rivals (in the professional sphere) are incapable of putting up an equal fight or cannot even begin to fight because they did not have the right social opportunities. Equal social opportunities, on the other hand, presuppose honest competition, and this constitutes a threat to those who could lose their advantage in this kind of contest.

A 22-year-old machine operator from Ufa, who is "much more accustomed to holding an instrument heavier than a pen," had this to say in his response to a letter quite similar to the one above:

"You close yourself off from society and create an elite group of highly educated but woefully heartless people—musical, artistic, and multilingual cretins."

One speaks of simpletons and the other speaks of cretins. What a fine conversation....

This is not a social dialogue. One has strong social pressure, clothed in cultural garb, on his side. It is no secret that the violence resulting from unequal strength does not have to be merely physical or power-related. It can also be psychological, intellectual, and cultural. The second has pure moral resistance on his side—he appeals for the "noble goal of justice." This kind of "power dialogue" is inevitable when the sense of fairness is displaced by spontaneous and uncontrollable social comparisons. Even though social comparisons are necessary, flexible, and functional, they represent only the "field of action," and not a source of the sense of fairness. It has a primarily moral basis. Of course, this moral basis has social origins, but it is not confined to spontaneous processes of social comparison and differentiation or to their effect on public thinking. The sense of fairness, as a regulator of social relations, is the result of complex and subtle interaction in the sociocultural system, where the "upper layers" of social thought (science, art, and the law) play an extremely important role. Obviously, the social sciences are of special importance here.

As a product of the spiritual activity of society, the moral criteria used in the evaluation of social life (and the concept of "fairness" is primarily one of these) are

engendered by the interaction of ethical and scientific thinking, and the two main principles of this interaction were set forth by K. Marx. The first is the striving for scientific objectivity in the description of social reality, for intellectual integrity. "A man who strives to *adapt* science to a point of view which has been taken not from science itself (as if the latter could be in error), but from *outside*, to a point of view dictated by interests *alien* or *external* to science is the kind of man I would describe as 'low,'" K. Marx wrote[1]. The demand for scientific conscientiousness is particularly acute today, and the response to it depends on more than just the availability and accessibility of social statistics to the sociologist. It is apparent that the accuracy of his own research methods is the primary consideration—the resolute rejection of the "methodology" of examples, the use of complete and dynamic sets of social indicators, the renunciation of the use of social "averages"—in other words, the analysis of trends for each specific sociodemographic group, the compulsory description of the methods used for the collection of information in each publication, etc. Accurate and conclusive sociological information is important as an intellectual "vaccination" against the stereotypes of common opinion, especially those resulting more from direct "interest" than from error or ignorance. Let us ponder this question: Who benefits from the assertion that the struggle for fairness is dictated by envy?

At the same time, from the Marxist standpoint, social significance as an element of sociohistorical practice cannot and should not be "ethically neutral." The simple "explication" of the ethics of research is also unacceptable when they pertain more to criticism than to scientific analysis. One of the sociologist's most difficult tasks consists in choosing a position of integrity from the scientific and socio-ethical standpoints—i.e., to make objective and impartial decisions on which of today's social groups are "agents of the future" or, in other words, which of them have the necessary moral, professional, and motivational potential.¹

It is not easy to define these groups and it is not easy to take their side, to understand their advantages and their problems, to explain tendencies and reversals in their development, to protect their interests and thereby protect the historic interests of the society as a whole. If these groups are found as a result of constant and thorough scientific inquiry, the interaction of scientific and ethical thinking is mutually enriching. If not, they come into conflict, and this undermines the very basis of the scientific analysis and the ethical position.

The mutual enrichment (or conflict) of the scientific and ethical views of the world will result in an interpretation of propriety (for example, fairness) as a specific way of measuring the world "in the form of the self-contained idea of goodness"[7, p 12], as "something distinct from reality: It requires compliance with moral commands and the elimination of realities which have come into

being under the influence of specific factors and circumstances" [7, p 94]. When O.G. Drobnitskiy expressed this belief, he stressed that "it is precisely here, in this contrasting of the ideal to reality, of how things should be to how they are, that the moral consciousness can penetrate the surface and reach the essential attributes of the human being as the subject of history"[ibid.].

Propriety, just as fairness, is one of the moral criteria used in evaluating the present state of social and individual development and its future. For this reason, social justice is a central topic in social criticism, in utopian theories, and in scientific concepts of society. It is also a well-known fact, however, that this is still one of the most complex issues from the standpoint of theoretical logic and that it requires constant clarification and development. The deadlocks arising in theoretical investigations in this sphere are connected primarily with the individualistic interpretation of fairness, when its rational bases and criteria are viewed as the regulating principle of the relations of the individual and society rather than as the principle governing the structure of the social system and the activities of its economic, political, and cultural institutions.

Western researchers, for example, avoid examining the macrosocial mechanisms of injustice and usually concentrate on an analysis of the internal logic and mutual compatibility of three basic formulas of social justice, three specific aspects of a single general and extremely abstract formula—"Each individual should have what he is entitled to, or what is appropriate"[8]. Any of these formulas—"To each according to his rights," "To each according to his services," and "To each according to his needs"—has a historical and philosophical basis, but the assessment of their human and social implications must take the current social "import" of these demands into account. Comparing them to the actual socioeconomic, sociopolitical, and cultural meanings of "rights," "services," and "needs" reveals not only their limitations and ambiguity, but also the apologist potential of any abstract formula of justice. The principle of distribution "according to needs" is utopian and even reactionary in a consumer society or a society with an official ideology of asceticism. The principle of distribution "according to services to the society" can take on fundamentally different social meanings depending on who determines the importance of the services and how this determination is made. The principle of distribution "according to rights" is potentially a more conservative interpretation of the abstract individualistic formula of justice. Even when rights are connected with the individual's social position, reinforced in some manner, rather than with social origins or an immutable social status, this can lead to the kind of class society and corporative state that is now being advocated by the extreme ("New") Right.

The Marxist approach to the issue of social justice is based primarily on a concrete historical analysis of the society as a single entity and on an assessment of the social differences existing in this society, representing

the actual social results of the interaction of class and group interests and the effects of the "accumulation of advantages" and the distribution and redistribution of social comforts and obligations. The nature and scales of social inequality reveal the real purpose of the regulation of social differentiation, covert forms of social injustice, the emergence of new mechanisms of injustice, and the actual distribution of property, comforts, rights, and obligations. The sociologist can speak of social homogeneity when the empirical nature of the respondent's social comforts and obligations does not depend on his membership in a social group.

The objective process of social structuring is dialectical and is the result of the interaction of two basic trends: constant differentiation (usually caused by economic factors) and the social need to prevent, limit, or eradicate social inequality, which actually represents unequal rights to social comforts and access to cultural values. The "criteria for the optimization" of these two processes should be the main functions performed by the regulation of social differentiation during the practice of scientifically sound administration. These functions consist in creating social guarantees for each individual's adequate existence and development; for the development of society (material and spiritual production); for the establishment and maintenance of the stability of the social system (for more detail, see [9]).

Social justice as an objective "property" of society (and not an arbitrary "subjective feeling") is more of a process than a state. It cannot be secured forever by any particular principle because not everything in society is controllable, and spontaneous processes of differentiation could adjust any social policy and give rise to new mechanisms of social injustice and new "cumulative advantages." Yesterday this was a matter of education, today it is a matter of social connections, and tomorrow it will be a matter of access to social information. Family-instilled "needs," which act as stimuli, possibilities, ambitions, and even "rights," are acquiring increasing significance as an "accumulated advantage." The renewal of the mechanisms of inequality testifies that social justice is possible only as a process of controlled development consciously aimed at social homogeneity and constantly striving for this goal. It cannot exist as a state—i.e., as a self-regulating but not developing system. For this reason, daily social effort is required, and this necessitates a learned capability for social justice and the creation of a scientific basis for this kind of learning.

Scientifically sound principles of fairness can be based, for example, on their capacity to serve as a regulative social mechanism. "Morality," O.G. Drobnitskiy wrote, "is...an individual's understanding of his own reality, including not only the facts of the current situation but also tendencies, possibilities, prospects, alternatives, and problems related to its development"[7, p 96]. The importance of this regulator for the individual is apparent, for example, in the fact that a negative assessment of

fairness (such as the correspondence of wages to the quantity and quality of labor) is more common than a negative assessment of the amount of the wages as such[10]. The functions of social justice as a regulative mechanism could be defined as the following.

First of all, the ability to sense injustice impedes the creation of a stable "lower stratum" of the social structure, which could reproduce itself with all of the ensuing social consequences (deviant behavior, the dramatic deterioration of health, especially in children, a decline in labor activity, etc.).

Second, sensitivity to injustice creates some guarantees for the "protection" of the social groups with relatively fewer opportunities to defend their interests (weak representation in administration and the mass media, professions with surplus manpower, etc.).

Third, a sense of injustice (even a vague one) is a symptom or "divining rod" indicating the emergence or existence of an unnoticed mechanism of social differentiation, seemingly spontaneous but operating according to "Matthew's Law"—i.e., only increasing in strength.

Fourth, the need for justice is a good guarantee against tenacious stereotypes of social thinking—for example, the idea that increased social differentiation stimulates more active labor. This is an extremely old stereotype,² and its essential purpose was explained beautifully by K. Marx: "The lower strata must exist so that the higher ones will be afraid of falling, and the higher ones must exist so that the lower ones will have the hope of rising"[2].

The more dynamic and pervasive social changes are, the more difficult it is to "balance" social interests, the more multidimensional social interaction becomes, and the less controllable the mechanisms of spontaneous social differentiation will be. Under these conditions, social comparisons as an element of common opinion can easily lose their bearings, lead to confusion, and cease to perform the function of accurate evaluation. The unpleasant consequences of this kind of confusion are not confined to the incorrect assessment of the status of various social groups and the existing level of social justice; something else is more important—the social significance of social justice itself is sometimes questioned. This gives rise to the ideology and mentality of the relativity of any kind of justice, which always benefit the privileged strata, to the prerequisites for the justification of any form of group egotism, and to attempts to replace moral criteria for the evaluation of social process with other criteria—for example, with economic criteria. The fairly abstract idea that social justice is "eventually" effective as an economic stimulus can lead to the incorrect and dangerous conclusion that "anything that is economically effective is fair." A journalist's line of reasoning sounds like a sad joke: "If a clerk or the driver of a taxi or other vehicle could be paid a certain percentage of the receipts and could be given a chance to

make a good salary without any absurd restrictions, people would consider the relative benefits of spending 3 years working honestly or 2 years stealing"[11].

Obviously, the "problem of fairness" is not a matter to be decided only on the basis of common opinion.

Footnotes

1. It has become almost impossible for some sociologists to see this group outside "their own" circle. Of course, it is not a simple matter for the sociologist to decide which groups are "supporting the earth." Obviously, it cannot be confined to the methods suggested by Sartre, for example, who wrote that an intellectual "has only one way of understanding the society in which he lives—he must see it from the vantage point of the most disadvantaged"[5]. The individual's ability to transcend the bounds of his own psychological and social position, however, is not merely an appealing moral quality but also an essential condition for coping emotionally with the world. In reference to this, V. Rasputin remarked: "What is the difference between one's own side and the other side, who drew the line between them, why is a person drawn to this line, and is it not the common destiny of all people to cross over to the other side?"[6].

2. "The upper and lower classes are necessary...and, besides this, they are extremely functional," T. Malthus wrote. "If no one in society could hope to rise and no one had a fear of falling, and if labor were not rewarded and idleness were not punished, there would be no sign of the perseverance and zeal with which each person strives to improve his status, which constitute the mainspring of social prosperity" (quoted in [2]).

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'Virtue' vs. Incentive (Notes on the Reflection of Distributive Relations in the Mass Consciousness)
18060005c Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 24-36

[Article by Gennadiy Semenovich Batygin, candidate of philosophical sciences, senior researcher at the Institute of Sociological Research, USSR Academy of Sciences, author of the monograph "The Substantiation of Scientific Conclusions in Applied Sociology" (1986), and permanent contributing author to our journal]

[Text] "It is not the mouse that steals, but the burrow"—Sholom Aleichem.

The law passed in November 1986 on individual labor is in force. For the first time in many decades it legally confirms that individual labor in the USSR is being used for the fuller satisfaction of public demand for goods and services, for the heightened employment of citizens in socially useful activity, and for their acquisition of additional income in accordance with the labor they expend. The passage of this law was not a routine matter. It demolishes common stereotypes and equalizing ideas about socialism, has made an important contribution to the more efficient use of the human factor, and can therefore have a significant effect on the nature of social production as a whole.

Individual and cooperative labor is no longer an experiment, but it is not a fact either. Is this law just another of the good intentions we already possess in such abundance, or will it reveal new possibilities for the enhancement of public well-being? There is no simple answer. This will necessitate scrupulous sociological analyses of the practice of enforcing the law, the means of its implementation and, above all, the means of eliminating possible obstacles. One of these is the accumulation of

prejudices in the public mind against individual labor and personal financial incentive. Furthermore, this concerns a larger problem, because there is no strict boundary between individual labor and labor in social production. In the final analysis, any human activity is individual, and the public interest can only be developed to the fullest when it is combined with personal interests. This kind of combination is an essential condition for a healthy economy offering all of the possibilities for the realization of the individual's labor potential.

The advocates of prohibitive measures usually regard individual labor as a deviation from the socialist principles of social organization. Their line of reasoning is simple. The possibility of "free" earnings will weaken collectivism and the desire to work selflessly for the good of the motherland, will undermine faith in communist ideals, will destroy the moral and political unity of the Soviet people and the guiding role of the CPSU, and will create a social basis for the restoration of petty bourgeois attitudes. References to the highest values of our way of life have served and will continue to serve as an irrefutable argument in the assessment and choice of patterns of socioeconomic development. A closer look, however, clearly reveals a false premise. The reference to collectivism and selflessness actually presupposes ordinary wage-leveling, the reference to moral and political unity presupposes the automatic compliance with the demands of superiors, and the reference to communist ideals presupposes the world of surface well-being that taught us just recently not to believe what we see with our own eyes.

The ideology of prohibition usually has no interest in specific social processes. To date, no one has been able to cite facts and figures to refute the high economic effectiveness of individual and cooperative labor. On the contrary, economic incentive is confidently but illogically turned into an alternative to ideological loyalty. The result is a foregone conclusion: It is better for everyone to be poor but equal. The "prohibitors" are not accountable for the consequences of their political phrase-mongering—the immutability of their "main point" absolves them of the need to solve specific problems. Philosophers and sociologists usually do not prescribe, but prescriptions are essential today.

Deviations from the principle of social justice are primarily the result of a lack of correspondence between the existing distributive mechanism and the new socioeconomic situation. Violations of the law and of Soviet morality are the other side of petty bureaucratic regulation and errors in planning. Individual and cooperative labor is an alternative to mismanagement and bureaucratic uniformity, and not to socialist production and ideological relations.

Social Ailment

There are hundreds of letters on my desk.¹ Workers, kolkhoz members, retired individuals, students, scientists, and the managers of organizations and enterprises

analyze distribution policy and the role of financial rewards, suggest specific ways of delivering our society from relapses into the obsession with accumulating and owning material possessions, and cite facts, facts, and more facts.... There are thoughtful letters, condemning letters, excited letters, angry letters, concerned letters, and instructive letters, and each is different from all the rest. For some reason, however, they are distinguished by a striking uniformity and monolithic unanimity: The position of the absolute majority of the authors could be expressed by a terse command, cutting like a whip, to "stop." I see this as a symptom of an epidemic of a serious social ailment, a chronic illness requiring lengthy treatment. I call it "prohibitionmania."

"Regards to the Moscow bourgeoisie," V. Rusakov from Sukhoy Log begins his letter. He then divulges the secret of his offended virtue: The world is divided into rich and poor, into exploiters and the exploited. The criterion is obvious—mansions made of stone are not earned through righteous labor. The simple solution, the method of treating our society for infection, is "extermination!"

There was a time when shortcomings knew their place: at the end of a text, following a list of impressive successes and the disclosure of tangible reserves. It goes without saying that all of these shortcomings were isolated incidents. The strategy of renewal and the party's appeal to amplify criticism and self-criticism and to call a spade a spade are supported by the broadest segments of the population. Literally each newspaper contains exposes. Unconcealed indignation at bureaucrats, people who take bribes, and people who are looking for a free ride is sometimes regarded as a sign of good form and progressive thinking. But it is probably time to take a look at this practice and realize that criticism is now threatening to become an entertaining and, paradoxically enough, importunate genre of literature. After all, openness and democratism are nothing other than the discussion of previously prohibited but now officially authorized topics. Furthermore, "hypercriticism" can be quite convenient for those who have done absolutely nothing to change things for the better. The assertion that "we have analyzed existing shortcomings in a bold and principled manner" is a new form of demagoguery.

We have so much to say about the human factor in restructuring, about the need to complete plan assignments, about the sense of proprietorship, and about socialist justice. As soon as the issue of individual interest in final results is raised, however, we immediately encircle it with the red flags of prohibition. What is more, now that antagonisms have been completely surmounted in the socialist society and peaceful constructive efforts are being made to renew social relations, the main enemy of the psychology of prohibition is the "private owner," a term used to refer to the man who acquires material possessions by stealing or embezzling, the owner of a private plot, the old lady selling carrots near the subway station, the star of the stage or screen

(rumored to be astoundingly wealthy), and anyone at all who "owns" something and pursues his own interests rather than the public interest.

It is probable that the only excuse for wealth in the psychology of prohibition is high office or official status. This is as it should be! In all other cases, it puts on a show of offended virtue because it has learned that virtue is the best possible synonym for need.

Prohibitive emotions concentrate completely on the fairness of distribution and are completely indifferent to the production of social wealth. When the accused in court is, for example, a so-called moonlighter, who has been earning money with a clear conscience, the average citizen is primarily interested in how much he has made. When he learns the amount, he exclaims, "Oh, how could you!" with righteous indignation, and he never considers economic accountability or the possible advantages.² What is worse, militant virtue, reinforced a hundredfold by prohibitive instructions or by mere administrative authoritarianism, boldly agrees to huge economic losses for the sake of subjectivist beliefs about social justice and the purity of public morals. I hope that fruit trees in private plots are not being destroyed today and that crops are not being plowed under, but as soon as the 1986 ukase on the struggle against unearned income was published, roadblocks and demands for certificates attesting to "non-thief status" resulted in incalculable losses of public—and it was public!—property. No one is accountable for these losses. There is no question that they were losses, but there is the consolation that "private-ownership instincts" were stifled.

Why is all of the force of this indignation aimed at those who "own" something? Why is this pseudo-socialistic virtue unruffled when laziness and complacency are combined successfully with poverty? There is one nuance which certainly does not explain the etiology of "prohibitionmania" but does help in diagnosing this social ailment. Antonio Gramsci had a cellmate who was a desperate extremist, an ultra-revolutionary, a fighter for righteousness and justice. He had once owned a shop but had gone bankrupt, and now he was tormented by a single thought: "Why me? Why me?" I am not trying to reduce the entire matter to envy and unsatisfied greed, but many discussions—even sincere ones!—about justice clearly display dissatisfaction with the mere fact that "someone owns something." Here is a letter concerning the fairly neutral topic of the fairness of the lottery, where fortune is known to be governed by the law of random numbers. Programming engineer S. Pistunov from Moscow writes: "I have playing Sportlotto for more than 5 years. This leisure activity has become quite popular among large segments of the laboring public and is an important way of involving the public in Soviet sports on a broader scale. On the other hand, it is not keeping up with rising public demands and requires radical improvement. For example, after I told my wife's brother (his full name is given) about my hobby, he made a wild guess and won 5,000 rubles, which was completely

unfair because I systematically base my choices on careful calculations, and he was not even expecting to win. Of course, chance has a hand in this, but there must be some kind of organization. I would suggest that the status of the player be taken into account and that aficionados of the game be issued special certificates."

Yes, this is disappointing, but there is no solution. Apparently, there is a higher law at work here: Money comes when you least expect it.

A more or less distinct "photograph" of excessively egalitarian attitudes provides only half the facts. It is immeasurably more difficult to explain the sociohistorical causes of extremes in public opinion and the origination and reproduction of the psychology of prohibition. In my opinion, there are two causes. The first is connected with the effects of authoritarian methods of administration on the spiritual atmosphere of the country, the creation of a specific type of mass consciousness—absolutely uniform and impenetrable to the slightest doubts about once ingrained beliefs. The cult of centralization and uniformity created its own human material decades ago, united by the willingness to make sacrifices for the "common" good, a belief in the irrelevance of the legal defense of individual interests ("you cannot make an omelette without breaking some eggs!"), and fear—the fear of the existing ruthless view of things, but an even greater fear of anything new and different. This human material was incredibly rigid, but it was also brittle and defenseless (they say that many viewed the exposure of the Stalin cult of personality as the collapse of their own ideal and their faith). Today relapses into the fear ingrained in the social memory of generations are taking the form of the prohibitive mentality.

The second cause was the failure to implement the 20th party congress line of democratizing social life completely and consistently. Until the middle of the 1980's the country was witnessing the spread of corruption, embezzlement on a dramatic scale, and various abuses of authority and professional status. Law enforcement agencies were unable to counteract these tendencies. The process of social deformation was stopped by the CPSU April line of the revolutionary renewal of socialism, but the long period of stagnation is still seriously influencing common opinion. The higher level of Soviet public welfare and culture and the intensive exchange of information created something like an unofficial social area where strong potential for public criticism took shape. Today the party regards the critical thrust of public opinion and attitudes as an important reserve and one of the conditions of success in restructuring efforts. It was in the same social area, permeated by the ideals of the struggle for justice, however, that mental "roadblocks" and pathological relapses into violence, xenophobia, and even totalitarian attitudes (amazingly enough, primarily among youth) underwent intensive development.

I will not list all of the symptoms of the "social illness," but I will repeat the main ones. The accuser suffering from "prohibitionmania" always believes that he is

socially healthy and that infections are spread by others. I. Serdyuk from Birobidzhan writes: "It is time to completely destroy the bacilli of money-grubbing that are spreading the bourgeois infection." Are they looking for the enemy?

Looking for the Enemy

How is the accusation worded? A point of interest here is the conviction in the public mind that the fairness or unfairness of income can be judged by the *size* of the wage. The socioeconomic mechanism of its acquisition is of no interest, because the main thing has been proved—it is "large." Therefore, it is criminal. Any person with a knowledge of the law is aware that income size is not an indication of unearned acquisitions. It is not direct evidence. At best, the two-story vacation home does not refute the belief that its owner is a thief, but the threadbare trousers and 40-ruble wage of the secret millionaire fall under the same logical principle. The advocates of the "dispossession of kulaks" make frequent references to the degree of probability: In 90 cases out of 100, they say, the person with many possessions is a thief. Let him prove that he is not. And if he cannot prove it, his vacation home, his Zhiguli, and his television set should be taken away and given to the poor but honest people. One of the fundamental principles of law, without which even moral judgments become arbitrary—the presumption of innocence—is overlooked here for some reason. People forget that the burden of proof is on the accuser, and not on the accused. No matter how much property a person owns, he is not obligated to provide any information. The collection of evidence is the prosecution's job.

Obviously, it is often difficult to substantiate an accusation. It would seem to be a simple matter—the man should be put in jail, but alas, the law is on the side of the accused (not of the criminal!): The failure to prove guilt effectively proves innocence. The police suffer this experience: They catch an inveterate bribe-taker in the act, and the person offering the bribe is also present and confesses. All of the necessary elements for a case would seem to be present, but then the man who has been detained pulls a statement addressed to the regional prosecutor out of his pocket and asserts that he was planning to report the incident. The law enforcement personnel are naturally upset, but there is nothing they can do about it. The law relieves anyone who admits to taking or offering a bribe of criminal liability. They are upset, but there is nothing they can do—**this is the law**. In this way, the person responsible for the bribe is "let off" on Article 173 of the RSFSR Criminal Code.

This is an upsetting situation for the advocates of severe penalties. What, release a criminal? Everything is clear to them because militant virtue lives on total and uncompromising accusations, recognizing no presumption of innocence or guarantees against the punishment of the innocent. You cannot make an omelette without breaking some eggs. This sinister "argument" is constantly

reproduced in the public mind, the blindfold slips from Justice's eyes, and she begins to see a person as a criminal in advance. Facts which do not refute the accusation acquire the force of proof in her—open!—eyes.

Let us consider the arguments of the supporters of the "dispossession of kulaks," constituting the majority of the authors of these letters. The fact that 3 percent of the owners of savings accounts "in one republic" have 20,000 rubles or more in these accounts is particularly irritating. Calculations are cited to prove the impossibility of saving this much money honestly, and facts upon facts are listed along with the demand to "put an end to this." Fewer authors say that honest labor could be a way of accumulating 20,000 rubles. And only an isolated few, six or seven (and almost all of them jurists!), write that the amount of money in a savings account cannot serve as proof of fair or unfair distribution.

In general, all of the commotion about "fabulous wealth" is largely due to the phenomenon of fear. "The horrors we see on the screen or read about in books are not enough for us and we seek the mysterious and sinister in life as well," O. Chaykovskaya writes. "This cocktail, consisting of curiosity, suspicion, and the hope of winning our share of fear, is an extremely sharp and pungent mixture and represents an important sociopsychological phenomenon"[4, p 236].

The prevailing approach to the struggle against unearned income in the public mind is based on unfounded assumptions. An indicative example can be seen in the opinions of the people who debated the candidate of economic sciences' attempt to prove in a LITERATURNAYA GAZETA article that 3 percent of the "rich" could be honest[5]. This alone incriminated him in terrible sins. The "agent of our Soviet bourgeoisie," his detractors insist, should "come down from Olympus" and establish a "trusting relationship" (?) with the "common people" and "give his capital to the people." They demanded his expulsion from the Academy of Sciences for his betrayal of Marxist-Leninist ideals. The terminology is familiar, especially to the older generation of Soviet social scientists, but this is only half of the problem. Here is a letter from N. Azarova, a retired woman in Moscow (she has two higher academic degrees and worked all of her life in sound union ministries and departments): "Personal savings (kept in a sock), jewelry, gold, cars, furs, rugs, and splendid furniture have nothing in common with national wealth. These people are robbing the state and the honest people. These things cannot be earned honestly! What were the editors and censors thinking when they authorized this kind of anti-Soviet article?"

It would be impossible to disagree with A.S. Tsipko, who writes that "leftist phrases are still sometimes likely to find support in public opinion. The excessively egalitarian interpretation of communism, which took shape at a time when the wealth of the property-owning classes was being confiscated and redistributed, is still common"[3, p 4].

Furthermore, money earned through labor is often confused with money earned with difficulty. The opinion of A.K. Zapolskiy, researcher at the Physics Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences imeni P.N. Lebedev, is indicative in this respect. Alluding to considerable scientific authority, he writes: "*No one* in the country performs more labor-intensive or more highly skilled work than the steel worker, and it therefore stands to reason that no one in the socialist society *should* be paid more than he.... What is needed is genuine remuneration according to labor." It would be naive to argue that the steel worker, the artist, or the scientist deserves a higher wage, but it is absolutely necessary to refute the quite common opinion that money is handed out by someone "from above" on the basis of the difficulty of labor or other considerations. We should recall the elementary economic fact that money is paid out (or, at least, should be paid out) for the socially acknowledged results of labor. Work can be difficult and still be bad or meaningless if no one has any need for the product of this work. It will have no use value or, consequently, any other kind of value. Work simply cannot be viewed in isolation from the society's need for its final result, including public demand. But if we discuss the matter without ignoring the fundamentals of political economy, we will clearly see that the remuneration for the labor of a miner, a professor presenting a lecture, a person standing in a marketplace, or a person writing an article depends not only on the difficulty of the work, but also and primarily on the demand for these types of labor and the supply of labor resources.

Many people, however, believe for some reason that economic realities, including prices, depend on the ideological and moral level of the seller, and that high market prices are the result of insufficient advertising.

"All people of moral substance will also condemn the performers who put too high a value on their performances, such as Alla Pugacheva," writes T.V. Vasilevskaya, a teacher from Moscow. "I have a different complaint: The official price of the tickets to her concerts is so low and the number of people wanting tickets is so high that I will probably never be able to buy a ticket at the box-office and hear her sing. And I am not eager to 'finagle' one."

All of us think about ways of correcting the situation in the distribution of the comforts of life and of putting an end to negative trends. Here the choice of means to the end is particularly important. I cannot agree with L.M. Rusinova from Minsk that "all means" should be used to combat unearned income. Is it necessary to draw up "social identification cards for large depositors," as Doctor of Philosophical Sciences G.A. Belov, a professor in the Scientific Communism Department of the Moscow State University School of Humanities, suggests? Is there any point in levying such high taxes that they discourage the use of individual labor for personal enrichment (V.M. Bryzgunov, Vladimir Oblast)?

The last suggestion warrants special discussion because existing taxation practices are choking the life out of individual labor (or, more precisely, of its legalized forms)—the life that is already so precarious.³

The situation today raises questions about the socioeconomic functions of taxation. In principle, the tax is a means of securing the *mutual* economic interest of the state and the individual producer (this distinguishes the tax from forcible extortion, tribute, "tax paid in kind," etc.). The size of the tax, however, reflects the degree of mutual interest.

What do the existing standard rates for the taxation of individual labor tell us? They tell us that we have legally permitted it but are now erecting fiscal-bureaucratic roadblocks. It is completely obvious that the state (and, consequently, all of us) can only be hurt by restrictions of this kind. In essence, they are contrary to Article 9 of the "Law on Individual Labor Activity," which says: "Tax amounts will be established on the basis of total income and with a view to the public interest." Society will not only lose the money it could have obtained in the form of taxes, but will also be deprived of a potentially huge quantity of goods and services. This will lead to the reproduction of shortages and, consequently, of unearned income. And what will we gain? Absolutely nothing. We will, however, have the satisfaction of knowing that the desire of certain individuals and strata for enrichment has been nipped in the bud—let things be worse for me, as long as they are not better for you. "Prohibitionmania" will not yield.

Let us take a look at another example. When the need to encourage individual labor arose in Hungary in the middle of the 1970's, the total taxes paid by craftsmen decreased by 200 million forints.⁴ In 1980 tax credits ranging from 5 to 40 percent depending on income size were introduced; income tax exemptions were established for tobacco, newspaper, and notions stands with a turnover of under a million forints; for candy, dairy, bakery and other shops with a turnover of under 2 million; for snack bars in plants and establishments, grocery stores, and consignment shops with a turnover of under 3 million; and for hotels, inns, and campgrounds with a turnover of under 4 million. As a result of these measures, the number of craftsmen and petty merchants has been rising steadily[8].

It is probable that the first steps in individual and cooperative labor in our country will not have a perceptible impact without active government support. It would be wise to exempt "private producers" from taxes for the first year or two and to offer them credit on preferential terms and insure their commercial operations, which necessarily entail risks. If, on the other hand, taxes are regarded as the tribute collected from "antipodes" or as the "tax in kind" paid by corroded degenerates, and if fiscal policy is viewed as a system of repression, the price of this kind of "fairness" will be too high.

Unearned income can be combated effectively only by economic means. V. Nikulak from Donetsk is correct in his opinion that "we must be certain that if a man has more than we do, it is because he has worked better than we have, and not because he has robbed us." This kind of certainty is guaranteed only by an economy devoid of outdated prohibitions. Then there will be no need to repeat the awful saying that "you cannot make an omelette without breaking some eggs."

Battle With a Shadow

There is no question that unearned income can be completely eliminated. Measures of this kind have been taken in the past, and there is no end of suggested measures today. Here are some of the elements of a "set of measures" proposed by A.M. Ismiyev, the deputy division head in a research institute:

"Citizens of the USSR will acquire property in accordance with an official list and only with consideration for living expenditures per family member.... Property and savings unconfirmed by official (take note of this word—G.B.) labor income will be confiscated after an inspection by state agencies; the concealment of property and savings will be regarded as theft.... The USSR Ministry of Finance will be instructed to take inventory of the property of each family and compare its value to the official family income for the last 10 years."

The author has a point: "The game will be worth the candle because there will be a dramatic decrease in speculation, parasitism, vagrancy, and theft." I do not think, however, that repression can make everyone honest and happy. We know of many horrible crimes against humanity—and we will probably hear about more in the future—which were committed for the people's own good, and we know the outcome of attempts to force people to "be happy."⁵

While I was reading the letters, I learned to my amazement that the majority of authors define unearned income as income that is not approved officially or stipulated in a document. The mass consciousness relies in all things on **AUTHORITY**—on an all-encompassing, superhuman force—and is firmly convinced that negative phenomena exist because the system of administrative control still does not cover every minuscule aspect of life. This omission must be rectified, all remaining loopholes must be blocked, and everything will finally be perfect.

"Everything was level on paper and they forgot about the ravines they would have to cross." Administrative legal orders regulating the process of circulation and exchange are either virtually inoperative (for example, the regulation of the subleasing of dwellings) or undergo a simple social metamorphosis, experiencing distortion and then taking the form of prices, at which point they become a burden for the consumer—there are no vacuums in an economy!

According to common opinion, the centralization of social control will solve the problem. The creation of a state committee on individual labor to perform controlling functions is proposed in many letters, for example. There is an almost axiomatic conviction that the creation of a "single center" and the elevation of the matter "to the state level" will eliminate the "spontaneity" that is the root of all evil. It is supposedly an obvious fact that the centralized and bureaucratized uniformity of functions and the strict and thorough monitoring of "inferiors" by "superiors" have much greater potential for effective control than the seemingly spontaneous diversity of life.⁶ It is only on the surface that decentralized "spontaneity" appears to have "no sense of direction." In fact, the laws of economic circulation are more irrefutable than the strictest orders from a superior. For this reason, when people rely on authority, they must not forget that it is not omnipotent.

It does not take a sociologist or an economist to understand that even the most sincere devotion to the ideals of justice and intolerance of the antipodes of Soviet morality can boomerang and inflict a severe blow—and, what is more, from the angle where it is least expected. Intolerance must be combined with realism, knowledge, and responsibility. I would like to remind the advocates of strict measures to consider precisely this responsibility to others when they plan ways of imposing official "happiness" on them. I think that the restructuring of the economic mechanism and the establishment of a balanced economy will reduce the interference of administrative bodies in economic behavior. Many of their functions will be performed within the framework of self-management.

And are we fighting the right enemy? It is possible that we are fighting with a shadow and that the real enemy is concealed from the view of militant virtue, and partly because this enemy is seated among the belligerent fighters for justice.

This line of reasoning seems too simple: The man without a conscience does hack-work, charges outrageous prices and, in general, is only out to make money. The simple, honest people, on the other hand, live a modest life, work conscientiously, and if they do give any thought to wealth, it is public wealth rather than personal. This view of things is firmly ingrained in the public mind. Income exceeding the norm is usually cause for indignation, but there is also the other side of the coin, revealing the distinct features of the real problem. I am referring to the situation in which conscientious, industrious, and even talented people are not rewarded enough for the results of their labor (which are sometimes unique!) and also have incredible difficulty breaking through bureaucratic barriers. Many of them are genuinely enthusiastic, and this would seem to be a good thing, but when they hear that their work is supposedly unnecessary, this enthusiasm begins to border on impotency. Let us consider, for example, an area in which I

have considerable experience—the academic social sciences. There are so many talented people working in this field who have virtually no chance of moving up the "professional ladder." The problem is that these people, these sweet and amusing eccentrics, are interested in science, and not in advancement in science, a matter requiring shrewdness and the knowledge of some special "rules of play." The transfer to the new system of certification only strengthened what Darwin might have called the process of unnatural selection. I could cite many cases of discoverers of outstanding inventions who were put in the position of pitiful petitioners and litigants. This kind of enthusiasm should make us feel ashamed. We should be ashamed that the intellectual potential of our country is still being wasted. This is not due to stupidity ("everything I say is trivial"), but to the artificial severance of the chain of economic interest connecting the producer with the consumer. It is sad and offensive to see capable experts demonstrating their talents to the fans of technical esoterica on the television program "You Can Do This." They should be paid, and paid well, for this. Alas, their labor and ideas are not being purchased by our departments. Inventions are needed by people, but not by departments. This is how things are.

Let us move on to an examination of the absolutely legitimate form of income known as wages. Are they paid for labor? In general, they are, but we are interested in specific cases. Sociological studies indicate that up to a third of our labor potential is being wasted.⁷ In view of this, can we call a third of the total state treasury payments labor-related income? We will leave this question unanswered for now. Here is another case: An enterprise makes as many television sets as it can, knowing full well that one out of every four will turn its owner into a disgruntled patron of a warranty service center. We still have to deal with official violations of the official rights of the consumer, guaranteeing not the faultless operation of the item, but the opportunity for allegedly free repairs; but they are certainly not free for the service center and, consequently, for you and me: We pay the cost of these repairs when we buy the television set. Ask the owner of a beautiful but silent "box" if the income of its manufacturers is labor-related. He will state with the firmest conviction that they have robbed him of 700 rubles through officially approved fraud. If a "firm" were to engage in such operations—this is such a ridiculous suggestion!—it would quickly go out of business. We are dealing here with an example of *official pseudo-labor income*, which has to come out of someone else's pocket, because money does not spring from a vacuum.

As we watch, the shadow of the private producer begins to disappear and the distinct outlines of the real enemy shine through the militant-virtuous fog. The real enemy is mismanagement, the failure to balance supply with demand, and the inability to earn (and not to obtain) money. In contrast to the "unscrupulous" private owner who does not conceal his intentions to make money but

usually does not defraud anyone (because it is unprofitable), officially approved pseudo-labor income is a direct threat to the interests of citizens.

We still have to secure effective legal protection of the interests of the seller and the buyer, regardless of their official status and the degree of the product's "collectivization" or "nationalization." In his article about Valentin Ovechkin's "Weekdays of a District," A. Strelyanny writes: "This is a book about how we have completely forgotten the simple and noble word 'bought.' All we hear is 'got,' 'acquired,' 'seized,' 'finagled'..."[12]. These are the realities of the extra-economic regulation of economic behavior, which have led to the loss of the material responsibility of the individual and the birth of a paradoxical and fantastic kind of property—property which does not belong to anyone.

The treatment of property as if it were one's own rather than someone else's or no one else's is a necessary prerequisite, and perhaps the only one needed, for economic responsibility (sociologists usually call this the "sense of proprietorship"). In this context, the sense of ownership, by which I mean the treatment of property with care and concern, is not inconsistent with collectivism but is a unique "element" of the public interest. Obviously, this is only true in the presence of the actual, and not declared, coordination of individual and public interests. The 27th CPSU Congress formulated an idea of fundamental importance to the Marxist-Leninist beliefs about property: The attitude toward property depends primarily on the actual conditions of the person's life and his ability to influence the organization of production and the distribution and use of the results of labor[1, p 39]. In the absence of this combination of economic interests, "public property is sometimes regarded by people as an abstract entity or purely legal matter. This is why it is treated as if it were owned by no one," L.I. Abalkin notes[13].

Propagandistic cliches are not the only reasons for the spread and reinforcement of excessively egalitarian stereotypes in the public mind. Reality itself and existing production relations dictated the egalitarian principle of distribution. We must admit that wage-leveling guaranteed a unique sense of security about the future, regardless of the results of labor, a sense of security predicated not only on the "Russian maybe" but also on actual impunity. Objectively, wage-leveling represented a distorted form of personal incentive under the conditions of property "belonging to no one," and a way of redistributing labor income or, more precisely, of taking it away from highly skilled workers and turning it over to the semiskilled. It would be naive to regard this as fairness, although some discussion is warranted because moralizing in favor of the poor was substituted for economic accountability in this distortion of fairness. Let us take a look around us. Most of the work is being done by a "select few." Why? For no special reason, just that this is their nature. They are entrusted with everything, they are overloaded, they are valued and respected, but equal

wages are paid to all workers to avoid offending anyone and to be fair. It does not even enter anyone's mind that the income being redistributed is not abstract money belonging to no one—there is no such thing—but has been earned by these "select few" workhorses.

The main thing impeding renewal is the firmly ingrained stereotype in the public mind of the priority of impersonal-state principles over the individual daily activities of people. We are used to seeing personal sacrifices for the sake of the public interest, and this is how our country was able to survive the most trying ordeals. Today we have a chance to implement the principle of the *unity* of personal and public interests, but the imperative of self-restraint and asceticism in the "social subconscious" dictates a "loftier" view of the world, especially in the sphere of labor ethics, where selflessness and self-denial still stand in opposition to "despicable" financial interest.⁸

Today the changes in the public assessment of material welfare are indisputable, but we constantly encounter nostalgia for extra-economic labor incentives. In an article with the indicative title "The Prevailing Interest"[16], O. Spasov complains that the "Philosophical Dictionary" contains information about entropy and the Encyclopaedists but does not say a word about enthusiasm, although, in his opinion, this is one of the most important concepts in historical materialism and scientific communism. He is also indignant at the fact that the "Entropy" listing in the Big Soviet Encyclopedia is 80 times as long as the article on "Enthusiasm." I will not compare and contrast enthusiasm and entropy or try to say which is more important. We are delighted with enthusiasm—this spontaneous emotion which shakes up the soulless economic mechanism. Without efficient cost accounting and effective incentives, however, enthusiasm is like a storm in an ethereal space. In any case, an attempt to base economic affairs on enthusiasm would be the height of naivete. We have often seen tireless enthusiasm turn into a farce.⁹

The opposition of duty and inclination, of incentive and virtue, and of poverty and wealth goes back to the dawn of civilization. The paradoxical alternation of these opposites was described with amazing clarity by Nikolay Nosov in an episode from the little book "The Adventures of Unseasoned and His Friends." To obtain a magic wand, Unseasoned had to perform three good deeds in a row. What could be simpler! In complete accordance with Immanuel Kant's teachings ("The high value of duty has nothing in common with the enjoyment of life"), however, an action only qualified as a good deed if and when Unseasoned was not pursuing his own interests. This presented the boy with an insurmountable obstacle—for example, he helped Scatterbrain find her hat, but he then remembered to his misfortune that he had a personal interest in this act. In this situation and others like it, the deed lost its moral value.

But could we not assume that reasonable prudence, financial incentive, and a desire for a better life do not constitute an alternative to virtue?

Perhaps we should consider Luther's words: If you want to be poor, there is no need to strive for wealth, but if you want to be rich, take up your plow and dig yourself out of the ground.

Footnotes

1. I must thank the editors of *Literaturnaya gazeta* for the chance to read the letters from their readers. How representative is the group? The use of letters to a newspaper for the study of the mass consciousness is risky at best, and not only because systematic displacement is inevitable. However impressive the individual observations might have been, the social whole evades discrete analysis "because of the impossibility of summarizing substantive indicators and because of the general contradictions and conflicts characteristic of this consciousness, which includes sometimes incompatible statements, images, moods, etc.[2, p 133]. B.A. Grushin feels that "this can be done with sufficient reliability and accuracy if we move from specific 'points' of the mass consciousness to its more or less extensive 'fields'—that is, if we resort to a certain integrated measurement of the numerous discrete characteristics of the consciousness. The last operation is performed with the aid of specific, primarily theoretical means of analysis"[ibid.]. This is the method I will use, analyzing the reflection of distributive relations in the mass consciousness on the basis of the letters to *Literaturnaya gazeta*. It is important that in this case the group of letters is the result of a unique process of natural self-selection by the group, the members of which address their thoughts to the newspaper as a social institution or organ of authority, and there is reason to assume that they identify themselves with the "whole." This is a fairly likely feature of the group of authors, and it precisely here that the boundary of possible displacement from the general group lies. For this reason, I am not saying that the mass consciousness is the common consciousness. On the contrary, the people expressing these opinions make up a fairly specific and small group of individuals.

2. A fact cited by O. Latsis provides a great deal of food for thought. Private detached dwellings alone account for around 16 million square meters of the housing area built each year, but almost no state organizations take bids from individual builders. Most of them hire builders without a contract. Billions of rubles' worth of construction work is performed in this way each year[18, p 78]. According to the estimate of V.G. Kostyakov and V.M. Rutgayzer, the total number of people moonlighting in the sphere of unofficial services could be as high as 17 or 18 million. The volume of unofficial public services reached 14-16 billion rubles in the middle of the 1980's[17]. The number of people engaged in individual labor in this sphere is estimated at a much lower figure

by A. Shokhin: 1.7-2 million[19, p 31]. In cities, however, individual labor activity accounts for 50 percent of all shoe repairs, 45 percent of all home repairs, 40 percent of all vehicle repairs, and 30 percent of all complex appliance repairs[ibid., p 30].

3. The issue of taxes was intensely debated before the law went into effect. There was the fear that taxes would inhibit the new socioeconomic experiment. R. Lifshits wrote: "The amount of taxes and patent fees must not be exorbitant. Otherwise, we will simply smother individual labor activity in the cradle, and it is in the society's interest.... The USSR Ministry of Finance and other state agencies must display wisdom in establishing tax amounts and patent fees, so that individual labor operations will benefit each and every person"[7, p 29]. What was the outcome of the debates? An income not exceeding 70 rubles a month is not taxed. An annual income of 3,000 rubles is taxed at a rate of 11.1 percent, with subsequent rates of 13.3 percent for an income of 4,000 rubles, 22.3 percent for an income of 6,000, and 65 percent for an income of over 6,000[6]. Did the USSR Ministry of Finance and other state agencies display wisdom? At a time of colossal effective demand, there is no question that these rates will restrict legalized forms of individual labor. Fear prevailed over wisdom here: the fear that certain excessively resourceful "strata" might become too rich!

4. According to the official USSR Gosbank rate, 100 forints are equal to 5 rubles 65 kopecks.

5. The psychological makeup of the philosophy behind the attempts to force justice on people is precisely, if not exhaustively, defined by M.K. Mamardashvili: "We usually assume (this is clearly seen in education, in any voluntarist manipulation of social matter, and in the idea of the 'new man,' which was one of the most ridiculous and tragic ideas of the 20th century and was exemplified in the description of 'writers as the engineers of the human spirit') that the existence of the very question of how a person feels in a particular situation or a particular lifestyle and the answer to this question are the prerogative of someone else, someone who knows better than the person himself what is good or bad for this person. And in view of the fact that both (for example, the indoctrinator and the indoctrinee) are part, according to the classic premise, of the same chain of being, which is uniform throughout its length and allows for the transfer of knowledge, the 'person in the know' can take resolute action to transfer knowledge to the other person's life, to shape it, and to rebuild it. If he resists, then, as Chernyshevskiy said, 70,000 lives are a trifling sum to pay for the establishment of the truth as one person sees it for others (since that time the amount of the 'trifling sum' has undergone incredible and almost cosmic growth). This is the reason for the fantastic development of something that could be described as triumphant social alchemy. And, of course, the alchemic

conversion of the 'social body' into the heavenly kingdom on earth necessarily entails mass violence, because people usually resist being 'dragged to the truth'"[9, pp 68-69].

6. A highly specific assessment of this kind of plan was formulated by A.I. Strelyanny: "Any complete and inflexible plan for distribution according to lists and 'apart from monetary considerations,' whatever the author of the plan might think of it himself, will be a plan for general negligence and irresponsibility, opportunism, squabbling and hypocrisy, a plan for a society in which each person will strive to do less but get more, a plan which will stop production growth and cause the decay of science and technology and the degeneration of culture"[10, p 591].

7. According to V.D. Patrushev's data, intra-shift losses of work time alone can reach as high as 15-20 percent of the total, and the addition of losses of whole days brings the figure up to 25-30 percent. This means that the length of the work week is 30 hours although it is supposed to be 41 hours by law[11, p 28].

8. The role of "noble" or "virtuous" motives in labor is analyzed in detail by I.M. Popova and her co-authors[14].

9. Andrey Platonov subjects this phenomenon to a merciless dissection. In "The Underground Sea," the herdsman Kliment says: "You try to do everything in a big way, but you end up with nothing. You feed the cattle just right—I even chew the grass myself before I offer it to them, and then I see on the report that there is a shortage of milk and that the cattle have stopped growing! ...They took 40 workers of both sexes from the kolkhoz for the central herd, and as part of the deal I got two helpers, two men who look smart. What is going on? They move around, they make a lot of noise, and they strain themselves—I felt their sweat myself—but things are just as bad and even worse in my herd.... I cannot do everything by myself—the cattle stand in the middle of the grass hungry and do not eat: They have not been watered! But my men are actually jumping with enthusiasm, they race around, but who knows where? When I call them, they come back; when I give them an order, they hop to it; when I check up on them, nothing has been done right. What is going on? What causes this kind of quiet hack-work? An evil person is something you can deal with, but a sneaky quiet one gives you nothing to go on. You cannot even catch him at anything so you can give him a good whack!" 'We are having a class struggle,' Bostaloyeva calmly said"[15, pp 73-74].

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Sociodemographic Composition of Incomplete Families

18060005d Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 37-42

[Article by Petr Pavlovich Zvidrinsh, doctor of economic sciences, head of the Statistics and Demography Department of Leningrad State University imeni P. Stuchka, author of the monographs "Studying the Birthrate" (1973), "The Population of Soviet Latvia" (1973), "The Life Expectancy of the Population of the Latvian SSR" (1976), and "The Population of Great Britain" (1979), and author of the article "Study of Student Families in the Latvian SSR" in our journal (1981, No 2, co-authored), and Ligita Rudolfovna Ezera, junior researcher in the same department. This is her first article for our journal]

[Text] The problems of the incomplete family, formed as a result of divorce, the death of one spouse, or the birth of children out of wedlock, rarely arouse the interest of researchers. The number of these families in the USSR is rising, however, especially in the Baltic republics. According to the 1979 all-union census, the highest percentage of incomplete families consisting of mothers (or fathers) with children was found in Estonia (15.6 percent) and Latvia (14.9 percent)—considerably higher than the union average (11.8 percent)[1, pp 252, 272, 282]. The number increased constantly in the Latvian SSR between 1970 and 1979 and rose by 2 percentage points[2, p 120]. This was largely due to a higher rate of illegitimate births.

In recent years the proportional number of children born out of wedlock in the Latvian SSR has ranged from 13 to 14 percent of total births. The illegitimate birth ratio rose from 19 percent in 1979 to 25 percent in 1984. It displayed a particularly dramatic rise (of 40 percent) in the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups.

To a considerable extent, the rise in the birthrate, including illegitimate births, is connected with republic and union measures to stimulate population growth. It is significant that the number of women receiving aid to single mothers in the Latvian SSR was 2.2 times as high in 1984 as in 1980. This dramatic rise was apparently due to the fact that some of the women who had scorned the negligible amount of this aid prior to 1981 later filled out the necessary documents in rayon social security offices and began receiving this aid after the payments had been increased from 5 to 20 rubles a month per child. In 1984, 21 out of every 1,000 women in the republic between the ages of 16 and 60 were receiving this aid. In cities of republic jurisdiction the figure was lower (17) because, as a special study indicated, there are fewer "accidental," unplanned pregnancies here.

To obtain detailed information about incomplete families consisting of a mother and her illegitimate child (or children), a demographic research team from Leningrad State University imeni P. Stuchka conducted a sample sociodemographic survey in 1985 and 1986. A representative sample group was surveyed by mail. The 2,000 women in

the group were sent questionnaires with a cover letter and a return envelope addressed to the organizers of the survey. We received 921 completed questionnaires; in other words, the rate of return was 47 percent.

The distribution of the respondents according to the number of children was the following: 72 percent had one illegitimate child; 18 percent had two children, including 13 percent with two illegitimate children; 10 percent had three or more children, including 6 percent with three illegitimate children.

Questionnaires were also completed by women who were married at the time of the survey: 1 percent were married to the father of the illegitimate child (or children), and 2 percent were married to the father of one (the last) of their illegitimate children; another 9 percent were intending to marry, but we do not have any data on the duration of these relationships. We can assume that the family situation for some of the illegitimate children changed several times as their mothers' partners joined or left the families.

Questions connected with the values of single women, their most significant daily difficulties, their intention to marry, and their children's feelings about their proposed marriage partners were extremely important in our research.

The research confirmed the existence of a direct connection between the educational level of the respondents and the number of illegitimate children in their families (Table 1). In fact, the connection for single mothers turned out to be even more direct than the connection revealed in the 1985 sociodemographic survey of married women (the respective Spearman coefficients were 0.96 and 0.85). According to the data of our survey, four-fifths of the illegitimate births were the result of an unmarried woman's conscious decision to have a child. In 18 percent of the cases the women did not want to terminate an unplanned pregnancy and became mothers without feeling any express need for children.

Table 1: Dependence of Number of Children on Education Level of Single Mothers

Education	Average number of children	Average number of illegitimate children
Higher	1.08	1.03
Partial higher	1.35	1.17
Secondary specialized	1.27	1.16
Secondary general	1.31	1.25
Partial secondary	1.65	1.52
Elementary	2.04	1.79
Total	1.40	1.27

The survey revealed that one-third of the respondents gave birth to children out of wedlock because they wanted to be mothers and had no chance of marrying; in

19 percent of the cases the respondents were disillusioned with their partners and did not marry them because they doubted their ability to raise a happy family; 15 percent of the women wanted to bear the children of lovers they could not marry for a variety of reasons. In this connection, we should recall the opinion expressed by A.G. Kharchev and M.S. Matskovskiy back in 1978: "Some women (and not all of them are in the oldest age group) underestimate their chances of marrying men who meet their requirements and whom they will be able to love. When a woman has to choose between marrying the man 'fate has sent her' or having a child with a man who is her ideal mate but cannot become her husband, she frequently chooses the latter"[3, pp 68-69].

In our study one out of every ten illegitimate births was motivated by the woman's hope of escaping loneliness in her old age.

We examined the following as the main differentiating factors influencing the motives for illegitimate births: the age of the single mother at the time of the birth, her level of education, and her priorities. We learned that the percentage of planned births rises perceptibly along with the mother's age (the Spearman coefficient of correlation was 0.83), reaching its maximum in the 35-39 age group (Table 2). We found a statistically meaningful connection between the motivation for illegitimate births and the priorities of the respondents. The women who assigned higher priority to children than to anything else in their life were more likely to consciously plan their birth in spite of the difficulty of raising them without a father. In general, the group of single mothers we surveyed placed a high value on children (84 percent of the respondents chose children as one of the top three priorities in life, including 69 percent who chose them as the top priority). Women with a lower educational level had a higher percentage of unplanned births. Respondents with a higher and secondary specialized education were much more likely than the rest to have illegitimate children because they wanted to be mothers and had no real marriage prospects, and women with a higher education were more likely to have the children of lovers whom they could not marry.

Table 2: Percentage of Planned Illegitimate Births Depending on Age of Mother in All Illegitimate Births

Mother's age at time of birth	Illegitimate births	Illegitimate births motivated by strong desire for children	First births	First births motivated by strong desire for children
Under 20	78	53	75	54
20-24	73	56	71	53
25-29	89	65	89	70
30-34	88	74	89	78
35-39	94	82	94	86
40-49	92	50	88	47

When the financial status of the incomplete family was assessed, the factors considered were the size of wages, aid to single mothers, income from private subsidiary farming, and assistance from relatives. At the time of the survey 9 percent of the families had a total average monthly monetary income of less than 70 rubles, 21 percent had from 71 to 100 rubles, 37 percent had from 101 to 150 rubles, 21 percent had from 151 to 200 rubles, 8 percent had from 201 to 250 rubles, and 4 percent of the families had a monthly income of over 250 rubles. Mothers with three or more children had a monthly monetary income 20 rubles higher on the average than women with one or two children.

According to the survey, material assistance from fathers is negligible: Most of the incomplete families surveyed received no assistance whatsoever and regular assistance was received only in rare cases (2 percent). Incomplete families received most of their financial support from the mother's parents or other relatives. According to the respondents, this assistance was quite substantial in one out of every five families. More than half of the women, however, were experiencing financial difficulties. For the sake of comparison, we should recall that financial difficulties were experienced by less than 30 percent of the women with children who were surveyed in a study conducted in Latvian cities in 1978 and 1979[4, p 153]. Consequently, the material level of incomplete families is usually below the average.

Families consisting of a mother and her illegitimate child (or children) also live in less comfortable circumstances than the average family in Latvia. A comparison of our data with the results of a 1985 sociodemographic survey indicated that incomplete families are less likely to have their own home, part of a home, or apartment and are more likely to live in communal dwellings or in rented rooms.

To determine who cared for younger children (under a year, from 1 to 2 years, and from 2 to 7), we asked the respondents: "Who takes care of your child (or children) while you are at work?" We learned that only one out of every two illegitimate children under a year were taken care of by mothers who had taken a leave for this purpose. On the republic level women take advantage of this leave much more often. In the incomplete families one out of every four infants under a year is cared for by the mother's parents or relatives, and 5 percent of the women worked at home while taking care of their children. Cases of children left without supervision were not infrequent in these families: 4 percent of the working women in cities left infants of under a year alone at home, and the figure was 21 percent in rural communities. Similar data were obtained by V. Titarenko, who noted that "children in incomplete families are twice as likely to be left unsupervised"[5, p 94].

Most of the women (88 percent) went back to work after the child's first birthday. One out of every ten children in this category was also regularly left at home by the

mother without any adult supervision. Only one-third of the children in these families between the ages of 1 and 2 attended pre-school establishments (40 percent in cities and 22 percent in rural communities). Although the proportional number of children between the ages of 2 and 6 who attended pre-school establishments rose to 58 percent, one out of every five respondents with a child under the age of 4 complained about the lack of vacancies in these establishments. The situation is even worse for the single mothers working in rural communities.

Our data indicated that the grandparents of illegitimate children offered considerable assistance in their upbringing: In 54 percent of the families the child (or children) regularly received training from the mother's parents, and in 3 percent of the families it was the father's parents. When we compared our results to the data of a survey of working women with two or three children in Riga in 1975, we learned that grandparents are almost three times as likely to regularly take part in the upbringing of their grandchildren in incomplete families[6, p 19]. This connection was also discovered by some other authors. For example, E.V. Sokolov and B.N. Dukovich stressed that "the fact that a family is incomplete makes it the object of greater concern to relatives and the public, and they strive to help in the upbringing of children"[7, p 145]. This is an extremely interesting fact.

Therefore, the results of our study testify that the parental assistance offered to the single mother in looking after children and in material comforts is an important factor in the normal functioning of the incomplete family. According to the respondents, other relatives ranked second in terms of the significance of the assistance received in the upbringing of their children, and the mother's intended marriage partner ranked third. According to our survey, fathers do not play a great role in the upbringing of illegitimate children. One-third of the women said that they were completely responsible for raising their children. Furthermore, as the children grow older, grandparents and other relatives participate less in their upbringing (from 72 percent in the case of children under the age of 4 to 31 percent in the case of children over 14). In the overwhelming majority of cases the children in incomplete families have absolutely no contact with their fathers. Men living separately saw their children regularly in only 3 percent of the families, and occasionally in 14 percent. Furthermore, these contacts became less frequent as the children grew older, so that by the age of 14 illegitimate children usually do not see their fathers at all.

Table 3: Percentage of Women with Illegitimate Children Wanting to Marry in Total Group

Age	Want to marry	Do not want to marry	Undecided
Under 20	31	19	50
20-24	37	10	53
25-29	37	14	49
30-34	32	23	45

Table 3: Percentage of Women with Illegitimate Children Wanting to Marry in Total Group

Age	Want to marry	Do not want to marry	Undecided
35-39	25	26	49
40-49	13	40	47
50 and over	7	86	7

Women with children over the age of 3 were also asked to assess the participation of the child's father in his upbringing and the child's attitude toward his father. We learned that in families where children see their fathers regularly, the majority (69 percent) feel an attachment to the father. In all other cases children feel indifferent or do not want to see their fathers. Three-fifths of the women whose children saw their fathers regularly described their role in raising the children as positive, one out of every four felt that the father could not be a good influence, and one out of every eight said that meetings upset the child (or children). The lowest percentage of positive assessments of the father's contact with the child (or children) was found among the mothers of teenagers.

Table 4: Percentage of Incomplete Families Experiencing Various Types of Difficulties in Total Group

Types of difficulties	Families in Riga	Families in other cities	Rural families	Average
Financial	65	61	52	60
Unsatisfactory housing	51	55	52	53
Frequent illness of child (or children)	24	27	17	23
No one to look after child (or children)	21	20	27	22
Problems in school	21	20	24	21
Feelings of loneliness in mother	18	21	19	20
Arguments with relatives	16	14	13	14
Difficulty in placing child (or children) in pre-school establishment	10	15	11	12
Unsatisfactory relationship with father of child (or children)	7	8	9	8

Difficulties in the psychological development of the fatherless child are frequently reported. In our survey the women reported a particularly high number of problems in school for their sons. On the average, one out of every

five complained about difficulties in raising children. Incomplete families experience special problems when the mother decides to get married. This was the situation in 27 percent of the families surveyed; 60 percent of the women said that their future husband had a good relationship with their children, in 20 percent of the families the children did not know the mother's intended partner or showed no interest in him, and in 8 percent they did not like him.

The child's upbringing in an incomplete family depends largely on the mood of the mother, who often creates a psychological atmosphere unfavorable for the child's development. For example, one out of every five respondents felt lonely, one out of every seven had arguments with relatives and friends, and one out of every twelve had a negative view of her relationship with the father of her child (or children). More than one-fourth of the respondents said they wanted to marry and approximately the same number—most of them in the older age groups—did not want to marry. The rest were undecided, either because of their earlier disillusionment or because of their conviction that they could not find a suitable partner capable of replacing the children's father (Table 3).

When we surveyed the single women, we made a considerable effort to learn their opinions about the main problems of families consisting of a mother and an illegitimate child (or children). We learned that the issue of financial security and housing conditions are particularly important in these families (Table 4). Respondents said that their inferior material and housing conditions were the cause of more frequent illness in small children and often the cause of problems in upbringing. When a mother is constantly occupied with her job and housework, she suffers from nervous tension and exhaustion and this has a negative effect on her relationship with her child. Judging by the data of our survey, financial security is the greatest problem for incomplete families in cities, especially in Riga.

Mothers listed the group of problems connected with raising children without a father and with pre-school care in second place, and the problem of loneliness in third place, especially in the case of women living in small towns.

In conclusion, we must stress that the disclosure of the distinctive features of the incomplete family formed as a result of the illegitimate birth of children can aid in the clarification of the demographic policy envisaged in the first sociodemographic republic comprehensive program in the USSR—"The Population of the Latvian SSR in 1986-2000." The dramatic increase in the number of incomplete families will necessitate the more thorough study of various subtypes. In particular, our study revealed several serious problems in the development of one such subtype and clearly confirmed the superiority of the family headed by a couple, especially in the demographic and social reproduction of generations.

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Old Books, New Readers

18060005e Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 43-49

[Article by Aleksey Georgiyevich Levinson, candidate of art history and head of the Sociological Research Sector of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of Industrial Design. This is his first article for our journal]

[Text] The subject of this article is the development of the new type of reader and new reading habits during the course of what is known as the experiment in the sale of books in exchange for waste paper.¹ The "waste paper experiment" warrants the attention of sociologists for several reasons. The public and the press have taken a great interest in the experiment from the very beginning (1974). It was launched in 10 cities and now encompasses many large centers and has assisted its organizers—the Soyuzglavvtorresursy [Procurement, Delivery, and Utilization of Secondary Raw Materials] Main Administration of the State Committee of the USSR for Material and Technical Supply, the State Committee of the USSR for Publishing Houses, Printing Plants, and

the Book Trade (Goskomizdat), and several large publishing houses—in solving several technical and economic problems successfully. The fact that neither the issuance of the books nor the acquisition of the waste paper was the only problem or the main problem was an extremely important part of the success of the experiment. What is more, the social and cultural consequences discussed in this article were not planned or analyzed by the organizers of the experiment. They did not enlist the services of sociologists for forecasts or assessments of the sweeping events that can be said, without any fear of exaggeration, to have marked the beginning of a new era in the book trade. It was precisely within the framework of this experiment that works of fiction first began to be published in editions of a million copies and sometimes even 4 million copies in our country, where an edition of 100,000 copies is considered to be a mass edition. During the years of the experiment almost 200 million books entered homes in exchange for recycling center coupons. Unfortunately, for many years sociologists paid no attention to the perceptible and significant changes in the cultural consumption of families connected in some way with the experiment[1].

For this reason, we will have to begin with an indirect study of the new consumer of culture. We will take a look at the actions of the organizers of the experiment, experts on what is known as cross-trading or “stimcommodities” (i.e., commodities stimulating recycling). In this case, their activity could be called an example of the kind of marketing which has been the subject of so many debates in our country with regard to its feasibility or infeasibility. What they had to do in this situation was to find a new commodity capable of stimulating the collection and surrender of waste paper by those who had not done this previously. They found this commodity, found a market for it, and organized and regulated the production of one and the development of the other.

During the years of the book famine and the book boom, when the experiment began, the commodity and the market were obvious choices, just as the selection of books from the Goskomizdat subject matter plan for editions of unprecedented size. For this reason, the specialist in “stimcommodities” (and not a sociologist or book merchandising expert) easily became an almost faultless expert on the demand for books.

This gives rise to a question: Is it right to think, as so many people do, that public demand surveys are the only kind of research the sociologist should be conducting today, including in the sphere of book publishing? The sociological study of books can provide information about social processes in the culture that is much more significant than information about consumer demand. If, on the other hand, no one knows what the consumer needs, marketing can be a great help.

The spontaneous marketing conducted during the course of the experiment was certainly not confined to precise guesses with regard to demand. For us it is a much more

significant and interesting fact that the experiment began a process that marketing and demand specialists would describe as the creation of a market, the development of its own reader-recycler, and the guidance of his behavior. The techniques used in the creation of new methods of bringing readers in contact, so to speak, with books were closely related to the sociocultural and socioeconomic situation of that time. The experiment is based equally on the love of books and their limited supply, on rising cultural standards and increasingly severe shortages, on the desire to read and the reluctance to choose, on the prestige of reading and the habit of watching television, etc. This experiment also set several specific mechanisms in motion, and these helped to win reader affiliation and to cultivate a new type of reader and reading habits. We will acquire information about this from the analysis of the body of “waste paper” publications further on in the article. Now we will try to learn why it became possible in our culture to equate (even if only through recycling center coupons) one of its highest values—books—with scrap, with paper trash.

Yesterday's bibliophile rummaged through old papers in the hope of finding a rare book. Today's book lover collects old paper to get one of a million copies of a popular book. Yesterday's hunted for books in second-hand bookstores, but today's spends his time in recycling centers. We can see that the prevailing cultural value of books is just as indisputable as the difference in the contexts in which this value exists. For example, in the past the connection between books and the historical predecessor of waste paper—rags—consisted only in the capacity of the latter to serve as the raw material for the pages of future books. The organizers of the “waste paper” experiment added completely different values to this connection. At the end of almost each book in the series there is an appeal to the reader, explaining that “the collection and surrender of secondary resources constitute an important state (!) matter.” It also lets the reader know that by providing the waste paper for three books, he has saved one tree and, consequently, “our forests” in general. Cultural value is mediated here, as we can see, by political and ecological values.

Nevertheless, in the “waste paper” experiment, as everyone knows, books are the “stimcommodity” and the waste paper is a form of payment. Previously useless paper trash becomes something like paper money for the purchase of books. As the waste paper becomes useful, old books, magazines, newspapers, and letters become useless. The recycler does not care what they say, because they are now paper instead of texts, kilograms instead of lines of print. Because of this, some people surrender rare books to obtain pulp literature. Sometimes the surrendered stack of waste paper includes earlier editions of the same books for which people are standing in the coupon line.

When we refer to the experiment as the spontaneous analysis and development of a market, we see the latter as freely developing demand interacting with supply.

This experiment represents the height of "marketing" in the book trade, and probably in the entire culture. This could explain its success, but this is also why the experiment is paradoxical, regulating the supply and demand mechanism without money. In general, the recycling coupons represent the "currency" in this system. The monetary value of books, their "nominal" value, is fully retained only outside the experiment, in what could be called "free trade." The book coupons, just as any other non-universal medium of exchange, are only the distinctive detail of a situation conflicting with the free exchange of commodities according to their value, a situation created by shortages.

Just as many other commodities in short supply, the waste paper coupons and their equivalent—books—are governed by their own "shortage" laws and are exchanged not on the basis of their value—i.e., the labor expended in their manufacture—but in line with the conditions of their "acquisition." "Acquisition," as we are well aware, is different from conventional purchases. The acquisition is not available to everyone who has an impersonal medium of payment, such as money, but only to those distinguished by status, acquaintance, kinship or, last but not least, bribery. The joy of this "distinction" is combined with traces of apprehension, if not conscience. This is the fate of those who "acquire." With this in mind, we can gain a better understanding of the appeal of this experiment: Against the background of the "acquisition" economy, a system has been established in which goods in short supply are accessible to everyone, and not just to "friends" or a select few. The person only has to spend some time and energy in the completely legal² pursuit of collecting old newspapers and standing in line at the "center," where he will be issued a coupon allowing him to enter a special, restricted section of a bookstore.

Books can only stimulate the collection of waste paper in a situation of many shortages, including a shortage of books. The consumer habits engendered by the "shortage civilization" have equated books with other barter items and have made the "waste paper" publications the object of demand by people who assume that good things are not bought at all, but are acquired in some other way. This is one of the prerequisites for the widely discussed practice of obtaining books "for show," "for decoration" or "for prestige"—i.e., their functioning according to the same rules as symbolic possessions in the ostentatious home[2].

By recruiting its own customers and making books part of their circle of demands and then of their needs, the waste paper equivalent has given these publications not mere value, but an absolutely special value. Now only *this kind of book*, acquired precisely in *this kind of way*, is acknowledged by *this kind of consumer*: This is a "real" book and it is endowed with two important properties. The first associates it with the rest of his "own" possessions, and the second distinguishes it from all other books, "other people's" books.

The distinctive nature of the "waste paper" publications causes the books in this series to make up a specific entity, something like an exclusive group. This set of books represents the world of culture and literature to its owner, a tangible, comprehensible, and accessible world. The world order is predetermined by the organization of publications within the set, its accessibility is determined by the clearly limited quantity (10 or 12 a year) of books for redemption ticket holders, and its viability is determined by the possibility of renewal and a certain degree of ambiguity: What will they issue next year?

The inner structure of this world of books can be judged by the external features of the publications issued in exchange for waste paper redemption tickets between 1974 and 1985. A more or less complete list compiled on the basis of items in *Knizhnoye obozreniye* (5 February 1982 and 25 August 1982) and other official "lists of books for sale in exchange for paper recycling tickets," includes around 120 titles. This complete "waste paper library" can easily be divided into 10 subject headings, each of which represents a mini-library itself.

The easiest to categorize are the children's books: "The Jungle Book," "The Happy Family," "Winnie the Pooh," etc. "The Young Guard," "How the Steel Was Tempered," and "The Gadfly" are the basis of the library for young adults. Books by Zoshchenko, Gashek, and Ilf and Petrov form the "nucleus" of the humor library. There are science fiction books by Wells and Belyayev, adventure novels by Jules Verne, Mayne Reid, and Cooper, and mysteries by Conan Doyle and Collins. There are from 5 to 11 books under each heading. This is also the proportional number of classics by our own (Pushkin, Yesenin, and Chekhov) and foreign (Stendhal, Balzac, Zweig, Dreiser, and Dickens) writers in the "waste paper" library. Books about famous people in the arts: "Goya," "Kyukhlya," "Pushkin in Mikhaylovskiy," and "Remembrances of L.N. Tolstoy," representing what might be called a "Lives of Famous People" in miniature, warrant special consideration. This category with the fewest publications has already demonstrated its popularity with the new mass reader. In the case of the classics, the organizers of the experiment could rely on their earlier prestige. As for such authors as Sukhotina-Tolstaya, Novikov, Rayevskiy, and Forsh, they were included in the library in the expectation that even a consumer who is not issued a book by Tolstoy or Radishchev and does not have any books by them will still want to have books about them. The appeal of these publications is therefore a reflection of names that are well known in our culture.

These subject categories are approximately equal in terms of the number of authors represented (7 +/- 2). They are not the same in terms of literary genre and form, but in the "waste paper" library as a whole there is a prevalence of novels and of epic series.

The "prevalence of the novel genre" reaches its height in the mini-library of historical novels. Here the number of writers is slightly above the average (11), but the number

of books is approximately triple the average: 27 publications. Furthermore, they are the longest books, because it is here that the novels in two or three volumes are concentrated.

Two authors give the historical novel category its unique quantitative features. Without them, the mini-library would not be any different from the others in the number of authors or, what is most important, the number of books. Before we give their names, we will analyze this exception to the rule in greater detail. As we can see, this is one of the secrets of the interaction of the "waste paper" experiment with the reader it creates.

Now that we have examined the "waste paper" publications as a library (or a set), let us examine them as a series (or a sequence). In other words, let us move from the position of the happy owner of the entire "set" to the much more inconvenient position of the person who has turned in his waste paper and is nervously awaiting the issuance of the next publication.

In 1974 several books were issued to sound out the market. They were written by seven authors. The next year 15 authors were represented, 3 of whom were being published for the second time. We can assume that they proved to be quite popular. They were Ilf and Petrov, Conan Doyle, and Dumas. The next year's 10 authors included Collins and A.N. Tolstoy for the second time and Dumas for the third. In 1977 Dumas was the only old author in the new group; in 1978 there were another four new authors and Dumas again; in 1979 there was only one old and familiar name among the authors and it was, of course, Dumas. In this way, with his incontestable authority, he connects the books of different years in a single chain, with his series of historical novels representing its basis.

In 1980, when the series of Dumas epics had already run its course, a little-known author named Druon was printed in a comparatively small edition of 200,000 copies. But what the "waste paper" library issued was not simply any old historical novel about the French monarchy, but the first book in a specially conceived and announced series. The next year Druon was already represented by 4.1 million copies of two books. The function of the pivotal point of the "waste paper" library, the target of reader expectations, was clearly being transferred from Dumas to the "Cursed Kings" series. Books by Druon were issued again in 1982 and in 1983. It is possible that this role will be taken over in the future by the "Russian historical novel" announced in plans.

Therefore, the historical novels of Dumas and Druon occupy a special position. They are not chance guests in the "waste paper" library. It would be more correct to describe them as the hosts, and they are also the circulation kings. Between 1974 and 1983 Dumas took the lead five times and Druon took the lead three times in the circulation of "waste paper" books.

Historical novels perform special functions in comparison to other publications in the "waste paper" series, representing its quintessence. First of all, they attach the recycler to the special mechanism of book distribution by turning him into a regular consumer of each successive publication; second, they secure the accumulation of these books by the same individuals—i.e., they form libraries; third, they set the ideal for books within these libraries.

Certain requirements connected with the main publications in the "waste paper" set, such as the requirement that the book be a "thick" novel—or, better yet, an epic novel—and that it belong to a series or other sequence, that it deal with culturally approved subjects, and that it describe extraordinary situations, are far from coincidental. These are precisely the characteristics of the books for which there has been the highest demand in our country in recent years.³

The reasons for this warrant special discussion. The serialized format is one of the inner connections of the books making up a library. In the "waste paper" experiment the connection between individual books is exceptionally important (there was good reason to reinforce it with increasingly similar bindings). No single publication in the set appeals to the consumer by itself. The serialized genre, a sequence covering a lengthy period of time, is characteristic of many works in mass demand, and this is why it has aroused the interest of researchers[4].

We know that multivolume subscription publications, particularly the works of a single author, the "Library of World Literature" series, and others, are extremely popular today. We should also recall that the general public in prerevolutionary Russia read all types of "series" and "libraries."⁴ A publisher of literature for the mass reading public who was consumed by the desire to promote culture or by commercial greed "indulged" this demand primarily by issuing books belonging to series instead of separate works. This gave rise to new strata of the reading public with no experience in choosing books.

The serialized format which is clearly the aim of the "waste paper" experiment is clear evidence that these publications are creating their own consumer and collector of books. The higher circulation figures of editions are a sign of the expanded reproduction of this kind of consumer.

The exact number of consumers of "waste paper" publications is not easy to calculate. In the first year the organizers of the experiment expected to exchange only 3.5 million books for coupons, but the projected figure for 1975-1980 was already 10 million a year. Recently around 30 million volumes have been exchanged for Soyuzglavvtorresursy coupons each year.

Approximate calculations and an analysis of circulation figures suggest that at least a million home libraries contain extremely similar sets of a dozen or several dozen "waste paper" editions, especially translated historical novels. Besides this, tens of millions of home libraries include at least a few of these editions.

These conclusions could also be stated in a less cautious form: We believe that in several million homes the "waste paper" editions are the only type (or the prevailing type or main type) of books read for pleasure (we are not referring to textbooks or technical literature). For these collectors, the experiment has become an introduction to reading. It has also set the styles and standards of book collection: the appearance of the book, the treatment of the book, the means of obtaining the book, etc. The reading habits of these book owners must differ considerably from the standards and values of the book lovers and bibliophiles who have few or none of the "waste paper" editions in their collections, and whose collections are the largest.

This new type of book culture is not only a result of the boom and the shortage. It was equally influenced by the circulation policy and the assortment chosen by the organizers of the experiment. The 180 million "waste paper" books are all copies of only 125 thick works. Ordinarily, 10 times as many titles would be printed on the same quantity of paper. Each of these would have tens of thousands of readers scattered throughout the country, but the "waste paper" publication has a compact group of a million readers. The "waste paper" books are snatched up almost instantaneously by the ticket holders keeping track of publication dates. As a result, several people in a single subway car or streetcar are reading the same book. This kind of synchronous consumption is characteristic of newspapers, magazines, textbooks—in short, of mass media minimizing the differences between "recipients." This has not been characteristic, however, of books read for pleasure. The "waste paper" series, administered in doses of around one volume a month, trains people to read regularly and to read the same things (it is similar to television in this respect). It is not surprising that the public responds with such anger to delays in coupon redemption: They disrupt the synchronous consumption of a single, integrating text.

The waste paper experiment discovered and developed a new mass demand for books, but this demand did not presuppose its satisfaction in this precise manner, similar to the manner of the mass media or the school: a small number of books in huge editions, so that everyone reads the same works, even if they are better than the norm.

There is no question that the recycling of waste paper and the redemption of recycling coupons for books are voluntary actions, but there is much less choice involved here than in the purchase of an ordinary book. This fact should be given special consideration because the waste

paper experiment has served as the model for other recent undertakings in the publishing trade. The publication of a few works of fiction in huge editions of millions of copies seems to be a natural way of satisfying demand and cultural needs in a country with such a huge population.

In this connection we should recall that in culture the functions of integration and homogeneity, on the one hand, and of differentiation and heterogeneity, on the other, are usually secured by different media. The confusion of these media and the creation of functional imbalances are not conducive to harmonious cultural development.

An examination of the channels of acquisition and the composition of the "waste paper" books, just as we expected, provides us with some idea of their readers. We have not obtained any direct information about the sociodemographic features of this segment of the population, but there is every indication that it is not distinguished by any unique features. These are more likely to be found among the groups with no connection whatsoever with the experiment. As for the "curriculum vitae" of the reader of the "waste paper" books, we know for certain that he lives in a big city. (It is significant that we are increasingly likely to hear the opinion that today's mass consumer of culture is not a "hereditary" urbanite and that this puts him in a unique situation. But even 20 years ago lecturers in sociology were telling us that the percentage of "hereditary" urbanites was steadily declining as a natural result of urbanization. Therefore, we are dealing here with a universal, and not a unique, phenomenon.) In addition, we can say that the collector of "waste paper" books is usually a collective subject—a family. The collectors are adults (not teenagers or young adults). Even if they are fans of Dumas, Boussenar, or Mayne Reid themselves, they are collecting the books primarily for their children. Women usually play an important role in collecting and keeping books of cultural value in the home. In general, the "waste paper" experiment is geared to families with a "normal" income and a "normal" home environment. The similarities in the living conditions and values of this growing group of families were discovered in time by the "waste paper" experiment's organizers, and this is why they were able to continue the experiment, clarify its social targets, and expand its clientele (but not its assortment).

The most apparent of the initial results of this experiment was the discovery of a new multimillion-strong demand for books, and probably for other cultural values. This has given rise to the temptation to satisfy the demand for these other values on the same massive scales.

Another lesson the experiment taught us, however, should also be borne in mind. The demand it discovered came as a surprise only because our sociologists did not predict or disclose the corresponding changes in the society and the culture. Learning from this experience,

we can predict that the new mass consumers of mass cultural products (like the ones we described) will not be "mass" consumers forever. Tomorrow, in one way or another, they will split into a multitude of categories and groups with diverse tastes. This stage must be foreseen, and both the producer and the distributor of cultural and other items must be prepared for it.

Footnotes

1. The author is grateful to L.D. Gudkov and B.V. Dubin for their help in the analysis of the issues discussed in this article.

2. We are not referring to cases involving the misuse or speculation of coupons and books.

3. We would like to object to the unfounded identification of these "waste paper" editions with what is known as pulp literature or cheap novels. We will take the liberty of citing a lengthy excerpt from the "Pulp Literature" entry in the encyclopedia. "The characteristic techniques of pulp literature," it says, "include literary devices for the infinite continuation of the narrative thread; a novella structure loosely strung together by a single hero.... The pursuit of the extraordinary, the shocking, sharp contrasts (high-society drawing rooms and the urban lower depths, the slums)...the idealization of crime...a thirst for adventure—these are the salient features of pulp literature.... It is significant, however, that the use of outdated and vulgarized literary methods in pulp literature frequently leads to the use of this term to define works which have ceased to satisfy the literary tastes of cultured circles but which never pursued the goals listed above. The novels of Dumas, Eugene Sue, and other writers, for example, are incorrectly called pulp novels. The flourishing of pulp literature is often an indication of social and political reaction and the apathy associated with it"[3].

4. When the founders of the present "waste paper library" issued "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in an edition of 500,000 copies in the early years of the experiment, they probably had no idea that this was the 22d time the book had been published in Russia. It was printed the first time (in 1897) in issue No 311 of Suvorin's *Deshevaya biblioteka*, the second time in Sytin's supplements to the journal *Vokrug sveta*, the third time in the "Kopeck" series, and the fourth time in the "Public Library" series.

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Religious Consciousness and Behavior

18060005f Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 50-55

[Article by Farkhad Nazipovich Ilyasov, candidate of philosophical sciences, junior researcher in the Department of Philosophy and Law of the Turkmen SSR Academy of Sciences, and author of the article in our journal "The Experimental Validation of the Number of Points on a Scale" (1984, No 4)]

[Text] The sociologist is sometimes inclined to blindly trust the data of surveys indicating the percentage of the population professing various religions, such as Islam and Christianity. He is sometimes astounded to learn that from 80 to 90 percent of today's youth, according to some studies, feel the need to arrange, for example, for funerals with a mullah (or priest) in attendance[1]. But let us take a look to see what lies behind this external show of religious feeling: Is it fanaticism, a genuine belief in the religion, or a superficial acquaintance with it and an unconscious craving for its aesthetic features? An answer to this question and an understanding of the social implications of contemporary religious beliefs will necessitate a review of the historical metamorphosis of this institution.

The evolution of religion is primarily a transformation of the ethnocultural mechanisms for the reproduction of traditional philosophical stereotypes and the simultaneous appearance of new rites and religious cults. It once explained the world of nature and thereby regulated the world of man by serving as a moral and ethical paradigm of the truth. Later, however, the imperatives of the religious consciousness were deformed, sometimes to the point of complete dilution in the worldly and the ordinary. Religion was humanized, so to speak, and lost its rigid ritualistic requirements so quickly that there was no time to determine the exact criteria for the categorization of the laity as religious or non-religious. In any case, today there are more complex problems than clear-cut solutions, and the main problem is the absence of an integral conceptual picture reflecting the complicated process by which theism turns into palliatives bearing no resemblance to it.

The indicator of "participation in religious rites," representing the sum of a group of indicators of specific elements of religious behavior, has been used in literature to measure religiosity. Its validity, however, has been questioned recently. The reason is the stronger integration of civic traditions with religious rites, as a result of which the latter lose their religious content and become standards of secular behavior. According to the data of the Ashkhabad department of civil registry offices (1985), for example, around 97 percent of the people of the Turkmen nationality exchange wedding rings. We know that this ritual can be traced back to the rites of the Christian church, but today it is a symbol of a strong marriage and family. It is interesting that this custom is not connected with the church in the minds of the Turkmen people, whose ancestors were Muslims. It is clear that the choice of indicators of ritualistic behavior must be preceded by the careful analysis and sound choice of religious actions that could make up a general indicator of participation in religious rites.

Another indicator of religiosity—"belief in the supernatural"—is the sum of a group of indicators of the individual's belief in God and in various premises of theological doctrine. It is usually calculated on the basis of direct questions. When belief in the supernatural is the norm but is not encouraged by society, the reliability of responses declines sharply. Additional steps must be taken to heighten the reliability of survey results or of information collected in other ways.

The indicator of "attitude toward religious activity," measuring the total value of indicators of efforts to strengthen and develop religious institutions and relationships and to attract new members to the church, is used in some studies.

These are the most widely used indicators for the measurement of the level and degree of religiosity. "knowledge of religious doctrine" is used less frequently.

The main purpose of sociological studies of religiosity is the analysis of its interaction with the social behavior of the individual. This requires the appropriate descriptions of religiosity, closely connected with the quality and intensity of social activity. One solution—the development of a system of classification—presupposes changes in the level and nature of religiosity. It was proposed by J. Fichter, who divided believers into four categories: 1) confirmed believers (who take the most active part in church affairs); 2) formal believers; 3) the intermediate category; 4) passive believers (who take no part in church affairs)[2, p 135]. Fichter's categories have been expanded and described in greater detail in many different studies. Their shortcomings were pointed out by C. Glock: "The ideas...of Fichter do not explain how certain indicators should be combined for the classification of individuals in accordance with this system"[2, p 135].

The discussions of this matter revealed at least two points of view. The proponents of the first oversimplified the situation by expecting the respondent to settle the matter. They based classification on the answer to a single direct question: "To which group do you belong?" Below the question they listed descriptions of the different categories. One of the obvious defects was the unfounded inclusion of indicators of different types in a single scale: "belief" and "attitude toward religious (or atheistic) activity." This results in the confusion of terms, more errors in measurement, and the more ambiguous interpretation of results. Let us look, for example, at neighboring positions on the scale—"indifference to religion and atheism" and "hesitation between belief and disbelief." We know that alternative questions, which are designed to measure the intensity of a characteristic, presuppose a linear continuum. Here, however, two different qualities are presented as elements of a single scale. The believers, non-believers, and the hesitant might be involved in religious or atheistic activity, but they also might not be involved in either.

Some authors propose awkward measurement procedures that unjustifiably complicate the collection of information. For example, the set of methods used by D.M. Ugrinovich includes 49 empirical characteristics, and specific correlations of these are used to relegate the individual to a specific category of religiosity[3, pp 143-144]. In our opinion, the following procedure is more reliable and less time-consuming. When information is being gathered, two direct questions should be asked: One measures "belief" and the other measures the "attitude toward religious (or atheistic) activity." A general index is subsequently constructed with the logical square method when the data are being processed.

An example of a system of religious classification is shown in Table 1. The values of the indicator of "participation in religious (or atheistic) activity" are arranged horizontally, and the values of the "belief" indicator are arranged vertically; the points at which the columns and lines meet represent specific categories of religiosity. In Table 1 each category is assigned a number, reflecting the degree of religious (or atheistic) conviction. For example, at the point where the values "confirmed believer" and "always takes part in all rites and encourages others to do so" meet (1), we find the category of religiosity that is assigned the same number by J. Fichter. Most researchers proceed from the assumption that only the "pure," ideal categories (they are numbered 1, 3a, 5a, 7a, and 9 in Table 1) exist in nature. This is apparently why they try to measure them on the basis of a single question. The contents of Table 1 indicate, however, that there are some individuals who do not fall into the "pure" categories. It is possible, for example, for an individual who is hesitant in his beliefs to take part in all rites and even in activity to strengthen the influence of the church.

Table 1. Structural Model of System of Religious Classification

Indicator of "belief"	Indicator of "participation in religious (or atheistic) activity"				
	Always takes part in all rites and encour- ages others to do so	Always takes part in main rites	Occasionally takes part in some rites	Takes no part in any rites	Takes part in atheistic work
Confirmed believer	1	2	3	4	0
Believer	2	3a	4	5	0
Hesitant	3	4	5a	6	7
Non-believer	0	5	6	7a	8
Confirmed non- believer	0	6	7	9	9

The system of classification in Table 1 can be used to study the connections between the nature of religiosity and the peculiarities of religious activity; in essence, the interaction of religiosity with other types of social activity has not been systematized yet.

Table 2. Correlation of Functions of Religion and Patterns of Religious Activity as a System of Indicators (Degree of Religiosity,)

Structural elements of religious activity	Functions of religion					
	Political	Legal	Ethical	Aesthetic	Explanatory-	Integrative
Cognitive	No 1	No 2	No 3	No 4	No 5	No 6
	0.2	1	11	1	2	4
Emotional	No 7	No 8	No 9	No 10	No 11	No 12
	3	17	47	8	43	6
Behavioral	No 13	No 14	No 15	No 16	No 17	No 18
	0.1	2	14	0.5	4/61	3

Let us construct the "society-religion-individual" system with a set of empirically determined characteristics (Table 2). Some explanation is needed. At the point where the "political function" column meets the line indicating the "cognitive element of the structure of religious activity," we find a numerical indicator (1) and its value (0.2 percent), indicating the percentage of the population of the Turkmen SSR over 20 years of age with some knowledge of the political doctrine of Islam.¹ At the point where the same column meets the line indicating the "emotional element of the structure of religious activity" (indicator 7), we find the figure 3, standing for the percentage of people with an emotional predisposition and willingness to implement the political doctrine of Islam. Indicator 13 (with a value of 0.1 percent) stands for the percentage of people striving to act in accordance with the ideals of the doctrine.

Experts (n = 48) were represented by two groups. The first consisted of scientific personnel engaged professionally in the study of religion and people specializing in the fields of historical materialism, scientific atheism, scientific communism, ethnography, and sociology. Experts

in the second group were chosen according to the following characteristics: 1) nationality (Turkmen); 2) age (from 30 to 45); 3) size of parental family (more than four children); 4) age and social status of siblings. The "snowball" method was used in the formation of this group. This requires further explanation.

In view of the fact that the religiosity of the native population was being studied, it is completely understandable that the most informed respondents were people of the Turkmen nationality. The "age" characteristic indicates that the attitude toward religion and the nature of involvement in religious activity have age-related features connected with the patterns of this activity. For example, let us assume that children and adolescents are involved in religious activity on the behavioral level. They still do not have sufficient religious experience and clearly expressed religious feelings, not to mention an adequate knowledge of Islamic dogmata. They are more likely to be distinguished by nominal participation in religious activity—i.e., the formal adherence to the behavioral standards recognized by

their parents and relatives. As they grow older, they could undergo certain moral and emotional experiences—i.e., religious feelings and experiences—which serve as the basis for a conscious desire to learn more about religious doctrine. In other words, as the individual grows older, he undergoes a sequential process of involvement in religious activity first on the behavioral level, then on the emotional level, and later on the cognitive level. A qualitatively different period begins at the time when the individual starts to pay special attention to religion (and to atheism) and when his views are skeptical to a certain extent. We believe that this period occurs between the ages of 30 and 45.

In our case, the "size of parental family" characteristic measures the number of family relationships and serves as an indicator of the accessibility of information. The validity of this characteristic stems from objective factors, namely the tradition of intensive family communication in the republic. For this reason, the "age and social status of siblings" characteristic secures the representative nature of information (people with adult relatives with significant differences in social status were chosen).

The experts were asked to answer 18 questions corresponding to indicators of religiosity (see Table 2) in a specific sequence ("top to bottom" and "left to right"). To clarify the political, legal, ethical, aesthetic, and explanatory functions of religion, we determined the exact percentage of the native population of the republic (over 20 years of age) meeting the following requirements: 1) having some idea of the content of religious doctrine (cognitive level); 2) having an emotional predisposition—i.e., a willingness and desire—to act on certain religious premises (emotional level); indicator 11 is the number of believers and vacillators; 3) the number of people striving to behave in accordance with certain Islamic principles was recorded on the behavioral level. We included two groups of indices in indicator 17: The numerator is the percentage of people who pray five times a day (namaz) and who fast, and the denominator is the percentage participating in such rituals as almsgiving and circumcision.

Finally, the integrative index records: 1) the percentage of people spreading religious ideas in one form or another (indicator 6); 2) the number of people striving to cultivate and arouse religious feelings in others and to convince others of their accuracy and validity (12); 3) the number of people involving others in religious activity (18).

An analysis of the data in Table 2 attests to the predominance of the emotional component. The number of those believing in the supernatural creation of the world and of vacillators was equivalent to 43 percent (position 11). Only 2 percent, however, were sufficiently well acquainted with the part of the doctrine that explains the creation and purpose of the world. This means that 41 percent of the believers and the hesitant are not familiar

with the object of their belief. In other words, *they believe without completely understanding what it is that they believe in*. On the other hand, 4 percent pray each day and fast. This means that only around 3 percent are true believers (in the traditional sense of the term)—i.e., people who pray each day, are familiar with the content of religious texts, and have religious feelings (or beliefs)!

Around 61 percent of the Turkmens take part in the circumcision and almsgiving rituals. The difference between this figure and the number of true believers (3 percent) stems from the inability of circumcision and almsgiving to serve as reliable indicators of religiosity. Rituals of this kind have lost much of their religious content and are inseparable from national traditions in the minds of participants. Furthermore, circumcision is not part of Islam at all. It existed before Islam and was a phallic cult ritual serving as a substitute for sacrificial self-castration[4, p 211]. Islam included (although in modified form) or sanctioned the alien elements of primitive cults it could not eradicate. Circumcision was one of these.

Now let us look at the difference between the number of true believers (3 percent) and the number who believe in God or are uncertain (43 percent). What is the reason for the high percentage (40 percent) of people who believe or are hesitant but are unfamiliar with religion and do not pray? These are apparently people experiencing certain feelings and emotions which they are inclined to give a religious interpretation. One possible explanation is the following: During the process of socioanthropogenesis, a sense of the "superego-value" as a reflection of the social nature of existence took shape in the human mind (along with the sense of the "ego-value"). The successful functioning of the primitive community necessitated the birth of a special psychological function contributing to the development of altruism and other complex social needs. But what happens when the need for the "superego-value" is not realized in concrete actions? In this case, this emotional sensation remains only a weak impulse and takes the form of "religious" feelings. In fact, "emotional experience is the psychological reflection of visual experience motivating the subject to pursue goals for unknown reasons"[5, p 38]. This lack of knowledge apparently can lead to the inappropriate realization of emotions. This is corroborated by the data gathered by psychiatrists: "Most of the pathological emotional states reveal an amazingly strong tendency toward objectification, giving rise to many different types of phobias, manias, and hallucinations"[5, p 45].

Therefore, any emotional experience, even an unconscious one, displays a tendency toward objectification. This is why the individual's need to sense a "superego-value," if it appears in the mind as an isolated emotion, can be objectified in a false form—i.e., in religious feelings. This is apparently why an individual assumes that the divine creation of the world is corroborated by his emotions and his personal experience.

This explanation is corroborated by empirical data. In particular, a correlation has been discovered between the level of religiosity and such social characteristics as gender (female), age (elderly), social status (low), and social position (peasant). The need for social contacts and, consequently, for "superego-values" is more highly developed in the social groups most likely to be exposed to the vestiges of religion (which explains this correlation).

Indicator 9 has the highest value (47 percent) and reflects the number of people with an emotional predisposition to adhere to the moral precepts of Islam in their daily life (see Table 2). The reason is that national and religious ethics merge in the minds of many people. In their opinion, adhering to religious precepts is the same as observing national customs. Let us take funerals as an example. The young people who feel the need to invite a mullah[1] are more likely to act on ethical motives than on religious ones—this is a national tradition. One of the studies conducted by the Department of Philosophy and Law of the Turkmen SSR Academy of Sciences (in 1984) asked this question: "Do you feel that the performance of religious rituals is the same thing as the observance of national traditions?" An affirmative reply was given by 36 percent of the respondents, and almost the same number could not respond.

Our system of indicators could be used for the construction of the appropriate systems for the classification of religiosity. One of the promising fields of further research is the disclosure of the connection between various categories and characteristics of social activity. This could serve as the basis for a social diagnosis of public religious feelings, a study of their time frame, and a forecast of their effects.

Footnotes

1. The results of a poll of experts served as the empirical basis for Table 2. The poll was conducted in Ashkhabad in 1985 in accordance with the author's set of procedures. The poll was taken to determine the full spectrum of religiosity (through a sequence of indicators). The values (or sequential positions) of the indicators here are relative, not absolute.

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Incentives for Engineering Work: Lessons of Belorussian Experiment

18060005g Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87 (signed to press 7 May 87) pp 56-59

[Article by Iraida Fedorovna Belyayeva, senior research associate at the Scientific Research Institute of Labor of the State Committee of the USSR for Labor and Social Problems. This is her first article for our journal]

[Text] The economic experiment on the Belorussian Railroad has become quite famous in the country and has won a deserved commendation from the CPSU Central Committee. The results of the railroad collective's work proved that the experiment was justified and viable. In 1986 its experience was incorporated on 10 of the country's trunklines and in the Minsk and Kharkov subways. In the future it will extend to all railroads and other sectors of the national economy. The main purpose of the experiment was to heighten the financial interest of each worker and simultaneously strengthen the economic responsibility of the collective for high final indicators. The Belorussian Railroad workers proved that wages could be increased with the aid of internal reserves, without soliciting funds from centralized sources.

As railroad Chief A. Andreyev noted, the main result of the experiment was that labor productivity in 1985 was 4.5 times as high as in 1981- 1984[1]. The rise in the technical and technological standards of production and the improvement of the managerial structure, the organization of labor, and labor norms freed more than 12,000 workers. According to preliminary estimates, the economic impact of the experiment will reach as high as 20 million rubles, and the wages of 85,000 people will rise. Socialist commitments for the 12th Five-Year Plan included a pledge to augment labor productivity by 15 percent[ibid.].

The preparations for the experiment and the implementation of the experiment itself required considerable effort on the part of all engineering and technical personnel. Suffice it to say that more than 40,000 piece-work norms, the wage scales of workers, the salaries of managers and employees, and various rates and fees were reviewed. The experiment enhanced the prestige of

engineering personnel and the social significance of their labor. It is significant that an average increase of 35 percent in the salaries of engineering and technical personnel and of 30.5 percent in the wages of workers is envisaged. These increases will be financed by the savings in total wages as a result of the overfulfillment of the transport plan and the freeing of surplus manpower.

The significance of the experiment on the Belorussian Railroad is clear to everyone today. This makes it all the more important to disclose unresolved problems, especially those connected with the mobilization of the human factor.

A survey indicated that the absolute majority of respondents regarded the experiment with approval and interest and were well aware of its purpose and aims.¹ More than 60 percent of the respondents had taken part in the explanatory work connected with the experiment and more than 30 percent had taken part in various related undertakings. The high degree of personal interest in the reforms can be judged by the fact that 90 percent of the respondents discussed the experiment with co-workers, 77 percent discussed it with family members, and 64 percent discussed it with friends. The respondents commended the economic effectiveness of the innovations, noting that many existing reserves and capacities had been put to good use.

Although the organizers of the experiment took great pains to find reserves for the augmentation of labor productivity and the elevation of salary rates and wage scales, they paid much less attention to the distribution of funds in such a way as to guarantee the stimulating effect of wages. Decisions on distribution were made on a purely economic basis, without consideration for social and sociopsychological factors.

Performance evaluations of engineering and technical personnel were supposed to secure the correspondence of amounts of labor and remuneration. Only 48 percent of the respondents believed that these evaluations had helped to establish a close connection between the labor contributed and the wages paid. Most of the respondents could not estimate the amounts of work of varying complexity in their daily activities, although this criterion is the deciding factor in the categorization of skills. An awareness of the connection between the amount of labor and the amount of wages demands that the worker understand the requirements of production and the criteria used in the evaluation of his performance. More than a third of the respondents had no knowledge of these criteria, and another third of the ones who did disagreed with some or all of them.

The shortcomings of the existing procedure of performance evaluation and its lack of objectivity have been discussed several times in our literature, but this aspect was ignored during the preparations for the experiment. What is more, the procedural recommendations drawn up by the Ministry of Railways for the dissemination of

the Belorussian Railroad's experience to other railroads in the country do not say a single word about the performance evaluation procedure.

The transition to the new salary rates was made without consideration for the most important factor—the workers' own opinion of the measures connected with the wage increase. As a result, this opinion was not taken into account sufficiently. One out of every four respondents felt that his wages had almost no connection with the amount of labor he contributed.

The fact that workers are not aware or not fully aware of the connection between wages and their labor contribution is easily amended if this connection actually exists. A simple explanation will suffice, involving the use of numbers to show people how their remuneration depends on their labor efforts. Things are much more difficult if this connection exists only in the minds of the organizers of innovations.

The socialist principle of distribution "from each according to his abilities and to each according to his labor" counteracts tendencies toward wage-leveling and necessitates the differentiation of wages in line with the labor the worker contributes. It is a complicated matter, however, to determine the amount of labor performed by each person. Besides this, evaluation criteria usually transcend the bounds of the purely professional and business qualities of workers. The effort to avoid conflicts and to not offend anyone cannot be ignored either. As a result, the stimulating effect of wages becomes a secondary matter.

During the experiment the wage increases extended approximately equally to the groups of engineering and technical personnel and employees. The rate of salary variation between groups was 16.40 before the increase and 17.25 after it. The respective figures within the largest group of engineers were 11.22 and 12.34. The desire to "share and share alike" also reduces the stimulating effect of wage increases because the percentage of the increase received by each individual is quite low and frequently has almost no effect at all on the family budget. For example, 44 percent of the respondents said that the wage increase had a negligible effect on their family's welfare.

During the experiment either the range of duties or the volume of work of the majority of respondents was augmented. Greater responsibility for the results of work was reported by 80 percent of the traffic supervisors, 64 percent of the engineers, and 54 percent of personnel on all levels of management, and heightened initiative and independence were reported by 40 percent of all respondents. One out of every two respondents felt that his labor had grown more intensive. In the opinion of 64 percent, labor discipline was strengthened considerably during the course of the experiment.

An increase of physical and nervous tension (Table 1) was reported by those with the greatest responsibility for traffic safety and regularity and the quality of passenger services: traffic supervisors and ticket office personnel. And this was not merely a subjective feeling. During interviews with the managers of subdivisions, the secretaries of party organizations, and the chairmen of trade-union committees, the opinion was expressed that traffic supervisors, ticket and freight cashiers, and freight inspectors are performing at maximum capacity and that any further increase in their workload will be impermissible without changes in the technical equipment of workplaces and the better organization of labor. For this group of workers, highly intensive labor is accompanied by heightened stress (65.8 percent).

Table 1: Evaluation of Effects of More Intensive Labor, Percentage of Respondents

Effects of more intensive labor	More intensive	No change	Less intensive
Physical fatigue	51.3	47.2	1.5
Nervous tension	65.8	31.7	2.5
Need to work after hours or bring work home	23.7	62.0	14.3
Possibility of continuing formal education or engaging in self-education	12.2	71.5	16.3
Possibility of improving skills	20.6	74.1	5.3

Over the long range, the continuation of these negative trends could affect people's ability to work and could lead to a higher rate of illness. The reduced losses of work time due to illness during the course of the experiment are no consolation because they were largely due to the decrease in the number of workers of retirement age.

Compensation for more intensive labor primarily with wages is hardly the best solution. It goes without saying that higher salary rates presuppose a larger work output: Each ruble must be earned. The content of labor, however, cannot be forgotten. All categories of workers should be relieved of the need to perform unskilled, routine labor. The declining prestige of engineering work is due, in our opinion, not only to disparities in wages, but also to the fact that the structure of engineering labor leaves little room for creativity because the engineer spends most of his time performing routine operations requiring no engineering skills.

What did the experiment do in this area? Three of the five most significant factors in the augmentation of labor are connected with wages, and two (the efficient use of work time and the redistribution of functions among workers) are a direct result of the freeing of surplus manpower. Respondents said that the organization of

work and the technical equipment of workplaces were not improved substantially during the course of the experiment, their labor was not enriched with creative elements, there was no change in the informational structure, and paperwork was not reduced. It is precisely here, however, that the potential for more effective engineering and technical labor is especially great. More than a third of the respondents felt that productivity could be heightened by the reduction of paperwork, and 25 percent felt that this could be achieved with a lower percentage of routine operations.

One of the strongest incentives for energetic labor is the sense that remuneration for labor is fair. Sometimes it is even stronger than the size of the wage. It has a particularly strong effect on work when changes are made in salary rates.

How did the workers of the Brest section of the railroad evaluate the fairness of the distribution of the new wage rates?

As part of the survey, respondents were asked whether they were paid a fair wage in relation to their labor contribution, to the wages of specialists on the same level, and to the wages of other members of the collective. Table 2 indicates that more than half of the respondents believed that their wages correspond to their labor contribution. Another 27.5 percent said they did not correspond.

Table 2: Evaluation of Fairness of Wages, Percentage of Respondents

Question	Yes	No	Undecided
Do you believe that your wages are fair in relation to:			
your labor contribution?	53.4	27.5	19.1
the wages of other specialists on your level?	40.0	35.7	24.3
the wages of other members of the collective?	41.7	31.6	26.7

We have already noted that many workers do not know the criteria used in the evaluation of their performance or do not agree with them because they do not see any direct connection between the amount of labor and the amount of remuneration. During the experiment there was almost no change in the rate of wage differentiation between various groups of engineering and technical personnel and employees and within these groups.

The absence of a clear and precise connection between the personal labor contribution and wages causes many workers to compare their status to the status of other

workers instead of comparing their contribution to the amount of remuneration they receive. Many respondents felt that they were not paid a fair wage.

Social scientists are often accused of not keeping up with the requirements of present realities, but it is time to also admit that the practical workers who make the preparations for some kind of administrative undertaking do not always make use of the research findings of theorists. This is what happened on the Belorussian Railroad, and this is one of the regrettable lessons of the experiment.

Footnotes

1. In 1986 the Scientific Research Institute of Labor of the State Committee of the USSR for Labor and Social Problems surveyed 13 percent of the engineering and technical personnel and employees of the Brest section of the Belorussian Railroad.

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Public Supply of Cultural and Personal Items
18060005h Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 59-61

[Article by Margarita Yefimovna Pozdnyakova, candidate of philosophical sciences and senior researcher at the Institute of Sociological Research, USSR Academy of Sciences. This is her first article for our journal]

[Text] Our household income rises each year, but the elevation of the standard of living is a complex and multifaceted process. In this article we will examine some features of the process on the basis of a unionwide study of the way of life[1] and a panel survey in Moscow Oblast (the first survey was conducted as part of the aforementioned project in 1981, and the second was conducted in 1986, with a sample group of 800 people).

The supply of goods for cultural and personal use in our households, including expensive items, is quite large. It is true that rural families are lagging behind urban families to some degree in the majority of goods. In rural areas there is an obvious shortage of the small appliances simplifying housework. There is a particularly acute shortage of technical implements for work in private subsidiary farming.

The main social groups also display significant differences. Specialists and employees have a better supply of durable goods than workers and kolkhoz members (see Table 1). There are also regional differences in the standard of living (see Table 2). For example, in the Azerbaijan SSR there is a much smaller supply of durable goods than in Moscow Oblast. On the other hand, there is more interest in Azerbaijan in prestigious and usually expensive items (furniture, crystal, rugs, etc.). They have traditionally been regarded as symbols of material well-being here and are still in short supply. It is no coincidence that the supply and the demand for these goods are much greater here than in the Moscow suburbs. Around 16 percent of the respondents planned to acquire cars, expensive objets d'art, and stereo equipment, one-fourth planned to buy expensive furniture, 28 percent wanted rugs, 21 percent wanted crystal and china, 17 percent were planning to buy furs, and 36 percent wanted stylish clothing.

Table 1: Cultural and Personal Items Owned by Various Social Groups (Unionwide Sample Group), Percentages

Items	Workers	Kolkhoz members	Specialists and employees
Refrigerators	53.8	41.5	76.1
Washing machines	67.9	58.5	80.6
Rugs	17.9	9.4	28.4
Jewelry and other decorative items	11.5	4.7	19.4
Subscription publications	6.4	4.7	16.4
Modern furniture	7.7	8.5	9.8
Cars	3.8	1.9	11.9
Pianos	1.3	0.1	6.0

The supply of hobby-related items is still small in both regions: sporting goods, books, still and movie cameras, etc. This is one indication of the popularity of passive forms of recreation. In general, however, the supply of

cultural and personal items, especially the latest styles and models, has increased substantially over the last 5 years.

Table 2: Public Supply of Durable Goods in Azerbaijan SSR and Moscow Oblast, Percentages (I—average;II—urban;III—rural)

Items	AzSSR, 1982: I	II	III	Moscow Oblast, 1981: I	II	III	Moscow Oblast, 1986: I	II	III
Refrigerator	72	88	51	87	88	84	89	87	90
Black and white TV	65	59	70	77	76	80	53	46	59
Color TV	14	21	7	16	19	12	44	56	30
Washing machine	44	61	24	73	73	73	73	74	72
Home radio equipment	64	70	58	65	67	61	65	68	60
Stereo equipment	8	13	4	9	13	5	13	22	8
Rugs	66	69	62	56	66	46	72	80	62
Sewing and knitting machines	56	59	54	54	54	54	51	58	43
Vacuum cleaner	26	41	7	53	60	41	65	77	52
Crystal and china	38	53	21	33	39	23	54	70	37
Furs	18	26	9	30	35	22	41	50	33
Stylish clothing	33	43	23	29	33	23	32	38	23
Modern furniture	45	44	34	26	29	21	34	47	21
Jewelry and other decorative items	27	35	19	23	26	16	25	32	18
Sporting goods and camping, hunting, and fishing equipment	5	7	4	20	23	14	20	25	12
Musical instruments	22	35	9	19	21	15	18	22	12
Books and subscription publications (over 100 copies)	19	26	13	18	22	11	20	30	11
Still and movie cameras	7	12	3	18	21	12	14	20	6
Car	10	13	9	9	10	7	10	11	9
Motorcycles and motor scooters	5	3	8	9	8	9	8	6	10

How has this tendency affected families with different incomes, needs, and interests? According to the union-wide survey, complete families in which the parents are from 31 to 45 years of age are the best equipped. Young couples and, in particular, incomplete families do not have enough of many cultural and personal items. In the case of some commodities, however, the needs of all groups are almost completely satisfied. For example, 85 percent of the respondents did not plan to buy a refrigerator, 81 percent did not plan to buy a vacuum cleaner or washing machine, and 88 percent did not plan to buy a black and white television set. From 4 to 8 percent of the respondents intended to buy replacements for these items.

Judging by the results of this study, the consumer ambitions of the young are greater, and they can easily make these purchases. This is particularly true of stylish and prestigious items. For example, stereo equipment is present in from 13 to 16 percent of the young households and in only 7-10 percent of the households of all other groups. Stereo equipment purchases are planned by 20 percent of the respondents in the first group and only 8 percent of the 31-45 age group and 2 percent of those over 45. The replacement of equipment is planned by 3 percent. Young families have more expensive ornamental items than other groups and 40 percent of them

expressed the desire to buy a car, whereas this desire was expressed by only 12 percent of the people between the ages of 46 and 60. It is true, however, that these families already have twice as many cars as the young families.

In view of the fact that the young family's income is usually fairly small, we might wonder how it balances its budget. With parental help. According to the survey, people between the ages of 45 and 60 usually have comfortable housing with a broad range of durable goods. In short, their cup runneth over. Therefore, the members of this group rarely buy expensive items for themselves and give their extra money to their adult children.

Last but not least, the absence of sporting goods and camping equipment in many homes was mentioned above. For this reason, the fact that around 80 percent of the respondents said that they engaged in athletics and sports is more likely to reflect the wishes or intentions of the respondents than the truth. Complete families with children displayed the highest percentage (30 percent) of ownership of these items. Incomplete families were at the other end of the scale. Purchases of this equipment are planned by one out of every five families, and replacements are planned by from 8 to 13 percent.

After summing up the results, we can say that the public demand for some items, especially expensive ones, has not been completely satisfied. As far as the vital necessities are concerned, the demand for them is almost completely satisfied. This will put higher requirements on the assortment and quality of cultural and personal items and aggravate the problem of reasonable consumption. Differences in income and in supply and demand are not the only important factors in this area. The person's choice of various standards and types of consumer behavior depends primarily on his way of life.

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And the Past Will Issue a Summons (A Sociologist's Thoughts About T. Abuladze's New Film)

18060005i Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 62-72

[Article by Leonid Grigoryevich Ionin, doctor of philosophical sciences, senior research associate at the Institute of Sociological Research, USSR Academy of Sciences, and author of the monographs "Comprehensive Sociology" (1978) and "Georg Simmel—Sociologist" (1984), and of the article "Fascism—Pathology of History" (1986, No 4) and other articles in our journal]

[Text] An interviewer once said to Tengiz Abuladze, the director of "Repentance": "There are moviegoers who believe that it is wrong to stir up the past. What do you think?" Abuladze answered in Lev Tolstoy's words from the article "Nikolay Palkin": "Why not speak of the past? If I had suffered from a serious illness or a dangerous one and I was cured or had recovered, I would always speak of it with joy. The only time I would not speak of it is if I had been sick and was still just as sick or sicker and I wanted to fool myself"[1].

In addition to the direct and self-evident meaning of these words, there is an implied message: In sickness and in health, I am myself. Pathology cannot change the nature of my individuality. There is also another meaning: Illness is universal by its very nature. It has nothing to do with individuality, because anyone can be ill.

If all of these allegorical phrases are stated in simple terms, they will say that our society has been suffering from an illness, and that this illness has acquired the features of an epidemic, especially in the 20th century. Everything that happens today is a reaction to the illness

and attests to a lengthy and difficult recovery process—i.e., to democratization with all of its positive implications for the social organism.

Utopia of Total Equality

The movie tells the story of Varlam Aravidze, the "head of the city." It is the story of a man who wanted to create a heaven on earth in the city entrusted to his care. "Some blow bubbles, others hunt for enemies of the people, and still others draw pictures," Varlam says, and then adds in a whisper: "Is this normal? Is this normal?!! Workers work, traders trade, and loafers loaf.... This is how things are. But this is not how they will be! We will build a paradise in our city," he exclaims to his amazed confidants.

An Eden is immediately constructed. The garden is covered by an opaque glass dome, with guards posted outside, and a recording of the "Sabre Dance" can be heard full blast among the potted palms and brooks.

Varlam knows the road to paradise. It is "science and progress," entailing the standardization of life, and "art and enlightenment," reducing creativity to the mathematically precise but dispassionate rendering of the classics. Varlam and his assistants sing an Italian aria impeccably in a trio, and Varlam himself recites a Shakespeare sonnet artistically:

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry, As, to behold desert a beggar born, And needy nothing trimmed in jollity, And purest faith unhappily forsworn, And gilded honor shamefully misplaced, And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted, And right perfection wrongfully disgraced, And strength by limping sway disabled, And art made tongue-tied by authority, And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill, And simple truth miscalled simplicity, And captive good attending captain ill....

The classics are isolated from spiritual tradition here, however, and are divested of their human content. All of the sounds are like plaster casts of a marble statue. Varlam's skill is astounding, but it is not exciting. This dispassionate art is official in the fullest sense of the term, capable of speaking on behalf of the state, but not of expressing the individuality of the artist or composer. At the same time, art kept alive by tradition—a temple with ancient frescoes, bringing the memory of past human emotions to life—is being destroyed. The temple is first turned into a scientific laboratory—could this be the temple of science crowning Campanella's "city on the hill"?—and is then demolished.

Science, art, enlightenment, and progress are only the means to a single end—the faultless functioning of society, inevitably entailing the standardization of actions and feelings.

Any kind of individuality is an obstacle on the road to paradise. Those who promote individualism—the artist Sandro, for example—are “anarchists” and “enemies of the people.” They are turned into enemies (according to Varlam’s logic) by their ability to feel and express their feelings in an individualized manner. They are “objective” enemies of the utopia, which cannot tolerate diversity, and they must therefore be annihilated.

Individuals “do not count” in this kind of utopia. Huge mobs and colossal feats are what count. The naive Elen tries to console the wife of the arrested artist: “You must not grieve. You must raise your daughter to be a conscientious citizen and a worthy woman. What else can you do? Maybe a few innocent people will die, but think of the colossal achievements ahead and of the great future we can expect.” Her eyes blazing, she begins reciting Schiller’s “Ode to Joy.” A choir is heard, and Sandro the artist is tortured while the jubilant strains of “Embrace, you millions...” are heard.

Elen herself disappears the next day.

A single individual is of no consequence when the issue at hand is the happiness of millions. This single individual can be anyone, regardless of whether he displays creative individuality or strives to merge with other beings undistinguishable from himself. The very fact that he is a single being is his fundamental fault. The mythology of the “embracing millions” is one of the facets of the utopian logic governing Varlam Aravidze’s thoughts. This logic itself seems unfathomable at first and paradoxically leads millions to torment and death for the sake of its own triumph. But it does ultimately make sense, because it is only after they are dead that these countless human beings achieve absolute equality and merge completely with one another.

It is impossible to forget the look of ecstasy on the face of Elen, who has disappeared without a trace.

Instrument of Authority

The individual is doomed in Varlam’s world. The mob stands in opposition to each person and serves as an instrument of authority aimed against each person.

Varlam is always on the side of the “masses.” This is the reason for the unfathomable relativism of his view of the world. He engages in an interesting “debate” with his boss Mikhail (soon to become his victim). “The truth?” Varlam asks, “What is the truth? Truth is on the side of the majority. The majority is always right.” In Varlam’s opinion, Sandro the artist is an anarchist, a decadent “enemy of the nation,” simply because his denunciation was signed by a “group of artists.” This provides sufficient grounds for his arrest. The grounds are real although the denunciation itself is obviously false. “I am just carrying out the will of the people. After all, the letter came from the masses,” Varlam rationalizes.

Theoretical and cognitive relativism is matched by ethical relativism. For Varlam, “anything that helps our cause is moral,” because “our cause” is the cause of the masses or the majority. There is no qualitative description of the masses whatsoever, and their only pertinent characteristic is their opposition to the individual. For this reason, a single individual can be treated in any way whatsoever. Everything is evidently moral because it is done on behalf of the masses.

Varlam Aravidze appeals to the masses and manipulates them. After singling out an individual and setting him up in opposition to the masses, he can freely annihilate him. He can do this with each of the beings making up the masses. And this is what he does to Mikhail Korisheli, Sandro the artist, his wife Nina, their friend Elen, and many others who are mentioned by name but are never shown in the film.

But the entities making up the masses are not only human individuals. There is the individuality of the group, which is also unacceptable in Varlam’s utopian logic. In the perfect society it is impossible for “loafers to loaf, artists to paint pictures,” and specialists to hunt for enemies of the people. Each person must be everything (or nothing). Collective individuality is also an enemy of the masses. This applies to physicians, engineers, the military, etc. The idea of structured masses is contrary to the logic of total equality—this is what Varlam “discovers” in the film. An overly zealous assistant brings him a carload of “enemies,” whose only fault is their common surname. Varlam is frightened by the abundance of “enemies” at first but does not take long to convince himself of their guilt. After all, they have the same name and this distinguishes them from the “masses” (is this what the stool-pigeon secretary whispers in Varlam’s ear, and is this the reason for his sudden advancement?).

The real Varlams destroyed whole nationalities, whole professional and social groups, and when reality did not change to fit their maniacal will for a utopia, they tried, like Pol Pot, the Cambodian Varlam, to annihilate the entire population.

The masses are always right. They are opposed to the individual, to each entity. It is clear that the execution of the masses is only performed by Varlam on what is essentially a verdict handed down by the masses themselves. Varlam Aravidze is an executioner, but he is only executing the sentence the “masses” have passed on each of the beings making them up. He is faceless because his face is covered by a mask. In a certain sense, he is only a deduction of the idea of total equality.

The masses do not exist as a stable entity. They are stabilized by a bureaucratic system. This is the basis on which Varlam rests. The absurd accusations in the denunciation from the “group of artists” cannot be simply discarded, because the paper has already been “registered in so many offices!” The social structure in which Varlam Aravidze lives and works, the structure

which he created and which gave birth to him, could be described as a gelatinous mass with a bureaucratic system serving as its rigid backbone.

Needless to say, the utopia of total equality differs radically from the goals of the socialist society. It strives for the thorough and creative development of individuality. It is precisely in this way, through diversification rather than through standardization, through collective and creative inquiry rather than through bureaucratic orders, that the unity and integrity of social life must be achieved.

The Anti-Hero

Varlam does not completely reveal himself right away. At first he seems to be a different person: a friend of the children, a cheerful man, a connoisseur of the arts, a gallant cavalier, a steadfast public servant, and a man wholly devoted to the common cause. Later it turns out that he has always been the same but has worn a variety of masks to deceive the "enemy," to confuse him, and to compel him to forget the impending danger.

The most horrifying thing is that this entire devilish performance is witnessed by unsuspecting people with no evil intentions whatsoever. This is why Varlam's maneuvers seem so sinister: He kisses the hand of the artist's wife, compliments Sandro himself, and invites him to take part in the enlightenment of the people ("How can your work and my paintings enlighten the people responsible for the 'Hero in the Tiger Skin'?" Sandro asks). And all of this takes place just before the artist's prearranged arrest.

It appears that Varlam's treatment of his victims is completely unmotivated and is an indication only of his sadistic inclinations. In fact, however, he is motivated by the same inhuman and implacable logic. "Enemies" become "enemies" as soon as Varlam notices them and thereby distinguishes them from the masses. As individuals, they are "objective" enemies. Then the game with the masks and all kinds of tricks and deception are appropriate and necessary.

It is even better if the enemy has no idea of what will happen to him. This means that the tricks worked. Usually, however, Varlam's behavior around his victims fills them with an oppressive sense of dread and the expectation of something horrible. Furthermore, they are powerless to do anything to prevent it. They have an inner innocence because they are devoid of evil intentions. And authority, represented by Varlam, wears a mask of good intentions. There is no reason to take any kind of action. And then the doorbell rings in the middle of the night, and armored guards stand on the porch saying "Peace to this house." "Are you Sandro Barateli? You will have to come with us. There is no cause for alarm, it will only be for a short time." While the master of the house is getting dressed, the guards take paintings

off the walls, pack his things, and run their iron fingers across the piano keys. The procedure by which a person disappears from his home, from his family, from life itself, is complete.

Varlam's "pranks" are intended to set the victim apart from the masses, to confine him to himself, so to speak, to individualize him, and to "objectify" him as an enemy. Five minutes before the arrest, Varlam's secretary goes to the basement closet where Nina, the artist's wife, is huddled with her daughter, tells her that they will come for her in the night, and gives her money and tickets: "Leave, hide somewhere.... Maybe you can save yourself." Guards crouch by a low window and watch the procedure. As soon as the unfortunate woman has dressed her daughter, picked up a small bundle of her things, and rushed to the door, sinister shadows appear on the porch and the words "Peace to this house" are heard.

This is not simply a game, a sadistic "prank," but a military stratagem designed to provoke or reveal evil intentions, to provoke an escape. The innocent person has no reason to run. The fact that the person's fate has been decided in advance is of no importance; he has revealed himself as an enemy. This is the same line of reasoning as in the medieval witch hunts: A woman was bound hand and foot and thrown into the water. If she drowned, it meant that she was not a witch. If she did not drown, it meant that she was a witch and had to be burned at the stake. The outcome was the same in either case.

Varlam Aravidze becomes more callous as he changes masks and plays his tricks. The initially hidden logic gives way to overt frenzy. Everything began with the promise of paradise on earth, a bright future, and universal rejoicing, with the mask of compassion and sincere trust. But now quite different words are announced, from the same balcony and with the same jubilant music playing in the background, to the marching crowds. "We must be vigilant. A man cannot be trusted, neither his words nor his actions. Concealed enemies are all around us. For every three people there are four enemies. Four, because one enemy is greater than one friend."

He goes on: "The Chinese have a saying: It is hard to catch a black cat in a dark room, especially if it is not there. But nothing is impossible for us. We will catch this cat!" These are the "great deeds" and "magnificent goals." It is for this absurd omelette that the eggs are being broken.

Writer Elias Canetti wrote a brilliant analysis of the paranoid nature of authority in a totalitarian dictatorship[2]. He showed how delusions of grandeur give way to delusions of persecution and how inventive the paranoid ruler can be in seeking a "rationale" for his own actions and in dreaming up stratagems. All of this

could be a rough sketch for a portrait of Varlam Aravidze. It is true that the word "portrait" sounds ambiguous here because Varlam does not have a face of his own. He is always wearing a different mask, and the only thing they have in common is a pair of glasses with a sinister gleam. Only once do we see a closeup of Varlam's face: Mikhail slaps him, and his glasses are shattered when they hit the floor. But this face is not a mirror of the soul; it is only a part of the body. His reaction to the slap is purely physiological—a twitch of the cheek. His eyes remain absolutely blank and expressionless. Varlam is the personification of an absolute lack of individuality and of total death.

Total death is the inevitable result of the utopia of total equality. Equality cannot be complete until everyone dies, because even the dead retain their individuality as long as the living are still alive.

The Dead and the Living

One of my colleagues who saw "Repentance" said that this film is a social event of unprecedented significance but that it leaves much to be desired from the artistic standpoint. Although it is difficult to argue about matters of taste, I must object. A work of art which is not "artistic" enough is unlikely to become a social fact. We have seen so many films in which the thick leather of the images rips when it is stretched onto the ideological last. The metaphors in "Repentance" are different: They are amazingly "theoretical." Metaphor and meaning are the same here.

The basic metaphor on which the plot of the movie hinges is the figure of the living corpse. The life of "head of the city" Varlam Aravidze is narrated by Ketevan Barateli, the daughter of Sandro the artist and his wife Nina, who died in camps. Ketevan is being tried for sacrilege. Three nights in a row she went to the cemetery where the "head of the city" had been buried with honors, dug up the body, and propped it up across from the home of his son, Avel Aravidze. "I will dig up the deceased 300 times, and not just 3 times," she informs the court with disdain. "As long as I am alive, Varlam Aravidze will not be interred." Why should he not be interred? Because, as long as he is interred, he is alive and is poisoning the living, Ketevan explains.

This paradox can be resolved if we recognize the unified social structure of the living and the dead in each historical era. The social existence of an individual, in contrast to his physical existence, does not come to an end at the time of his death. He retains his social prestige and status and continues to play a social role, although "in a new capacity." What is more, his status can change even after his death and he can become socially more or less significant than he was in his lifetime. As the pretentious poem which was read at Varlam's funeral says:

But there is no death. There is a fatal leap Of immortal flesh and mortal fear.

The characteristics of role and status that change after death acquire quite tangible physical features: the size and shape of the grave, the place of burial, monuments, and posthumous titles. The prestige of the deceased is eventually embodied in the words and actions of the living.

In general, the structure of the kingdom of the dead reflects the social organization of the world of the living. The dead and the living of a specific society and a specific era make up a single entity, sometimes a more cohesive and viable entity than groups of the living of different races, religions, and ideologies. Our own dead are distinguished just as precisely from the dead of others as our own living are distinguished from living outsiders. The Egyptian cult of the dead, in which the dead were part of the world of the living (guiding their actions, helping them get along in life, and responding with the appropriate signs to presents of food and letters), has the most profound social meaning. This is probably the most vivid example of the universally observed unity of the living and the departed.

The kingdom of the dead undergoes upheavals, coups, and revolutions reflecting the social reversals in the world of the living. The destruction of monuments "aboveground" is accompanied by the degradation of the status of the earlier elite of the departed and the creation of a new elite. The social organization of the dead changes radically, and these changes are a clear indication of the direction and content of changes in the world of the living. The unique field of "necrosociology" could be developed and could be of help in explaining what is happening in the real world, the world of the living. It could explain why it is so necessary for Ketevan to disinter Varlam Aravidze's corpse.

In the national entity there are two fundamental, anthropologically defined statuses—living and dead. By disinterring Varlam, Ketevan turns him into an exile, neither living nor dead. He is a living corpse, a werewolf, a Gogolian wizard shunned, feared, and despised by the living and the dead. He is not merely removed from the ground, but also from society, from the nation.

Schuldfrage

Schuldfrage is the question of guilt. Hundreds of volumes discussing the question of blame for Nazism and its bloody crimes are grouped under this heading in German political and philosophical literature. It might seem that there is no room for argument here: Hitler and those who gave in to Nazi propaganda and took part in the crimes against humanity are to blame.

It is not an easy matter, however, to arrive at this seemingly obvious conclusion. And the main reason is that this conclusion presupposes the radical revision of

the status of vast numbers of the dead and departed: not only the Hitlerist upper echelon, but also Wehrmacht generals, captains of industry, war heroes and, in general, the people on the top rungs of the social ladder of that time in Germany. It is probable that no one has any illusions about the moral and political qualities of Hitler, Himmler, or Goebbels. But it turned out that it was impossible to knock them off their pedestal without dismantling the entire social structure of the kingdom of the dead or, to put it another way, without reassessing the entire course of German history. This requires a revolution in the kingdom of the living. Schuldfrage is the question of repentance. It concerns the nation as a whole, the living and the dead together, but it primarily concerns the living, those who are still alive today.

In the courtroom Ketevan Barateli says: "Revenge does not make me happy. It is the cross I must bear, and it is painful." Varlam's son, Avel Aravidze, is incapable of feeling this pain or of empathizing. His well-being, his prestige, his position in society, and his success in life stem from the high status of the deceased "head of the city" and the good name of the Aravidze family. The society he lives in has not changed in principle, and although the new head of the city refused to discuss the theft of the body with Avel, the deceased Varlam is still one of the pillars of this society, and his life and works are a basic link in the structural chain connecting the past with the present, the dead with the living, and a fundamental element of national unity in the broad sense of the term.

The admission of Varlam's guilt must be more than a reversal in the kingdom of the dead and must change more than the past. Above all, it must change the present, and Ketevan's persistence evokes fierce resistance and an absolute lack of understanding. She is turned over to a team of psychiatrists, headed by one of Avel Aravidze's good friends, and they determine that she is not answerable for her actions and send her to an insane asylum. They use her statement that Varlam will live and will poison the living as long as he is interred as the grounds for her commitment. "This obsession is proof of the defendant's mental illness," Avel Aravidze's lawyer declares. The argument between Avel Aravidze and Ketevan Barateli about Varlam's guilt is an argument about the future of society.

Atonement

Revenge is the pain and the cross Ketevan must bear. When Tornike, Avel Aravidze's son, learns the truth about the grandfather he was so proud of, he wants to share her pain.

Slander and lies took care of the problem of Ketevan, but this is a different matter. This is a rift in the man's own family, and the question of guilt has acquired a new dimension—this is not a question of Varlam's guilt, but of Avel's own guilt: Who is to blame for the ability of Varlam Aravidze to go on living after his death?

"You lied to me, and you turned me into a murderer," Tornike shouts at his father (the boy lay in wait for Ketevan with a gun and wounded her as she was digging up his grandfather's grave). Avel makes excuses to absolve himself. He launches into a series of tried and tested arguments: Varlam was not as bad as this woman says. He did so many good things, and the city flourished under his care. Besides this, it was a fight to the finish—"We had to get them before they got us." And this called for firm and resolute action; emotions did not come into it. "In general, it was a difficult time, and we today, especially you, have no right to judge Varlam." I do not remember whether Avel appealed to the masses, but his references to the difficult time and the complicated circumstances reveal the same kind of moral relativism that served as the basis of Varlam's deadly intrigues. But with the insurmountable obstinacy of youth, Tornike repeats: "You lied to me then and you are lying to me now." A slap in the face ends the argument.

This unforeseen rift in his own world, which had just recently been so safe, compels Avel to look within himself—i.e., to repent. He goes down into the cellar, where the paintings Varlam had once taken from the home of Sandro the artist are heaped against the damp walls. Here, in front of a candle and a crucifix, also stolen from Sandro's home, Avel has a dramatic dialogue with his own guilty conscience. "There is something wrong with my soul," he grieves. "I do not have a clear sense of what is right. I forgive everything: evil, lies, and injustice." He goes on: "I am an atheist but I wear a cross. In general, I can no longer tell the difference between good and evil...." A voice in the shadows taunts him. When he moves the candle into the dark corner, Avel sees only his own reflection in a broken mirror. An instant later he sees Varlam Aravidze in the mirror, looking at him through his glistening pince-nez and asking him with a jeering laugh: "To whom have you come to make this confession? To the devil!"

This is the moment when the son is identified with the father. Avel and Varlam Aravidze are the same person (both characters are portrayed brilliantly in the film by Avtandil Makharadze). Whereas earlier it might have seemed that Avel was fighting for his father and for his father's memory when he confronted Ketevan Barateli and had her committed, it is now clear that he was fighting for himself. This is the same fight: for his own well-being and position in society and for Varlam's position in it. One without the other is impossible. For this reason, the repentance is false (even if there are references to "some abuses"). Varlam is Avel's conscience. It is with him that he has the dialogue and it is to him that he confesses his sins. In other words, they have a common conscience and a common set of values. They are people of one world, uniting the living and the dead.

Tornike shoots himself. The barrel of the gun is inscribed: "To my beloved grandson from his grandfather." Varlam Aravidze is the notorious gun which, if it

is seen hanging on the wall in the first act of the play, it must go off in the third. In the third generation.

In "The Manual of the Christian Knight," Erasmus of Rotterdam wrote: "Impenitence should always be feared; it is the worst of all evils.... It is tempting and easy to fall into disgrace, but turning back and breaking through to the heavenly light is the hardest thing of all!"

Avel Aravidze's genuine repentance begins after his son's death. Repentance is less a matter of remorse for one's sins and confession than of penance or punishment for the sins. Tornike's death was one punishment. Avel chooses another voluntarily. After a night of utter grief, he goes out with a shovel, removes the hateful body from the grave, and throws it off a cliff at sunrise. As the body falls, the earth groans and the wind howls, as if a tightly wound spring had broken.

The Road to the Temple

But none of this really happened. The body was not disinterred, and there was no trial. There was no repentance.

Varlam, the "head of the city," died and was buried. Friends and relatives walked behind the coffin. The newspapers printed splendid obituaries with photographs. At the beginning of the movie Ketevan Barateli wipes her hands on her apron and glances at an obituary, and at the end she makes a couple of skeptical remarks in response to the praise for the deceased and returns to her cakes.

There was no trial, and Ketevan did not relate the life of Varlam and her own life at the trial. But these lives did take place. Avel Aravidze lives in the world created by Varlam, and Ketevan and Tornike live there too. Dangerous friction still exists, and the gun presented by Varlam still hangs on the wall.

The movie ends with a question. Much has already been written about the final scene. Ketevan looks out the window and sees an old woman in an old-fashioned flowered hat, with an empty knapsack on her back and a suitcase in her hand. "Tell me, does this road lead to the temple?" "No," Ketevan replies, "this is Varlam's street, and it cannot lead to the temple." "Who needs a road that does not lead to the temple?" the old woman says in anger, shrugging her shoulders.

At one time there was a church at the end of each straight stretch of road on the winding streets in the center of Moscow—Myasnitskaya, Pyatnitskaya, Nikitskaya, Sretenka, and Maroseyka. No matter where the road turned, it always led to the temple. This is a quite unexpected parallel to the image employed by the authors of "Repentance." In the 1930's the Varlams of Moscow demolished most of the churches, and today only a few domes illuminate the now senseless curves in the meandering streets.

This parallel is less a matter of urban ecology than of spiritual ecology. And it is not even a matter of which came first—the road or the temple—or of the faith professed in the temple. The question with which the film ends is a question about the purpose of the journey, the spiritual point of reference which remains despite all of the twists and turns in the historical road.

The Policy of Repentance

"Head of the city" Varlam Aravidze is one of the stars in the galaxy of Saltykov-Shchedrin's town governors. Each moviegoer will probably have no trouble guessing the name of the city where Ketevan Barateli, the martyr who suffered for the sins of others, lives. Each moviegoer will certainly try to learn the facts about the lies and injustice that gave rise to the need for repentance.

There are three types of bad or improper behavior: error, crime, and sin.... Error is committed through ignorance or ineptitude, the inability to foresee the consequences; crime is the result of malicious intent; sin is behavior that evokes shame. Error is corrected, crime is punished, and sin is repented. The choice of Varlam as "head of the city" was an error, his actions were criminal, but the concealment of Varlam's crimes by our contemporaries was a sin. Double standards, uncertainty, the absence of clear moral guidelines, and a lack of faith in oneself and in others are the products of unrepented sin. The need for repentance is the need for a clear definition of one's place in the world and one's feelings about oneself, about friends and strangers, and about the past, present, and future. In short, it is the need for the moral and historical self-identification of the individual and society.

This self-identification concerns all three periods of life: past, present, and future. Of course, the center of events lies in the present. More vigorous struggle in the present leads to the more active transformation of the future and past. The active society sees the past as the necessary foundation for today's construction. For this reason, it wants to know the elements of the past that can or cannot be trusted, that can be relied upon, or that must, after verification, be exposed as myths, fables, and ominous fantasizing.

What is important to the stationary society, on the other hand, is self-preservation at any price. It is not even a matter of preserving itself, but of preserving its own respectable image in its own eyes and in the eyes of others. It delves into the past for only one reason—to find confirmation of today's facts. If it cannot be found, it does not matter—the past can be invented.

In the imaginary state G. Orwell depicted in his famous novel "1984," there is a special agency, the "Ministry of Truth," engaged in the correction of the past. If, for example, a prediction the head of state made 5 years ago did not come true, all of the 5-year-old newspapers are removed from the archives and are replaced with newly printed issues in which the prediction corresponds to

what actually did happen. If a previously unknown person becomes one of the new rulers, the past is adjusted accordingly. Now anyone who reads the old newspapers can learn that the eyes of the nation were on this man long ago and that the entire country applauded his rise to power. If, on the other hand, someone disappears, all references to him are removed from newspapers and archives. A person who disappears becomes a person who never existed.

Lies of this kind might seem harmless at first glance—after all, the past is gone and, strictly speaking, it has nothing to do with the affairs of the present. It is much more important for us to learn the truth about what is happening now, today. But lies about the past are lies about the present. When we change false predictions to fit present facts, we turn coincidences into inevitabilities and build a fictitious chain of logic. People base their behavior on it, and this is why their behavior diverges more and more from reality. Everything goes to pot because we see people and things as something they are not.

This could be called "social autism." It is a dangerous and infectious disease which cripples the social organism at every level of its functioning. What are the implications, for example, of the common practice of correcting the enterprise plan at the end of the plan year? A moment of meddling with the past turns failure into a triumph. A hopelessly miscarried plan turns out to have been overfulfilled. Music plays and bonuses and challenge banners are awarded. The semblance of a flourishing economy is created. But the things that should have been produced are lacking.

It is also possible to decorate oneself with an order "from the past" by changing the assessment of past events. Eye-witnesses suddenly appear, and old newspapers come out of nowhere. Opportunities for this kind of meddling with the past are unlimited. But the more opportunities there are, the more the society will stagnate and sink into passivity. The number of rituals and festive ceremonies will multiply. The rituals are supposed to "objectify" the past and confirm its strict veracity. Attempts to discuss past problems are stifled because this threatens the safety and respectability of the present. But despite the monumental and ponderous nature of those times, the sense of the "authenticity" of events is oddly absent. Everything is diluted in a vague and shadowy world, so that it is difficult to even know the calendar year.

Tornike Aravidze had a vision: He saw a coffin in the square in front of his home. He saw the flowing curves of the stone terrace. The neatly dressed and well-preserved body of Varlam was in the coffin. Tornike's graceful mother (Avel Aravidze's wife) was doing a slow dance in front of the coffin, wearing a severely tailored dress and an elegant pair of imported glasses. This, of course, is a

political dance. It is called "Rest in Peace, Dear Varlam" and it indicates that the dancer had taken her stand in the argument about the past and present.

Varlam suddenly sat up in his coffin. He lay back down and, after fidgeting awhile, made himself comfortable by lying on his side, taking off his glasses, and tucking his hands under his cheek. It is clear that he is pleased with what has happened and will rest in peace.

While Varlam is resting in peace and the ritual dance is being performed, the present lives and is fed by the past. This is the kind of past the present felt the need to see. The legend of Varlam Aravidze springs up—a man with an extraordinary heart and the best spiritual qualities who laid the foundation for the city's prosperity. And all of this is done because the prosperous and successful Avel Aravidze needs a safe and decent past.

The present lives and is fed by a fictitious past. But the real past, the past Varlam created, also exists. It is sleeping, but who can guarantee that it will not wake up one day?

Repentance is a different policy. When a person repents, he contrasts his new self to the person he was in the past. The same thing happens to a society on the move. Two images are simultaneously analyzed, clarified, and contrasted: the past and the present. With a clear view of the past, the uncertainty and ambiguity of the present can be surmounted.

Repentance is, therefore, part of the transformation of the present. It would be naive to think that the present can be changed without changing the past (or that the past can be "corrected" without affecting the present). The highest social unity is the unity of the values and structural organization of the past and present, the living and the dead. These two realms always have the same organizing principle. The movements of the living therefore always disturb the remains of the dead.

The transformation of the past is an accurate indicator of changes in the present. In the film there was no repentance and the past was left undisturbed. The entire dramatic story depicted on the screen took place in an instant in the memory and imagination of Ketevan Barateli, who then returned to her daily concerns. But the film itself, which is being shown in our theaters, is nothing other than an act of repentance. This is why it is not only a remarkable and profound work of art, but also a courageous and honest political act.

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Establishment of Professional Identity

18060005j Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 73-79

[Article by Maksim Anatolyevich Manuilskiy, science editor of *Sotsiologicheskoye issledovaniya* and author of the article "The Social Meaning of the Term 'Practice': The Discussion and Resolution of the Issue in K. Marx' Works of 1844-1846" (1983, No 2) and of several reviews in our journal]

[Text] "There are several ways of planning a garden: The best way is to let a gardener do it"—Karel Capek, "The Gardener's Year."

Which functions should sociology perform? What is its place in the administrative system? Any specialist has asked himself these questions quite frequently and has answered them with his own work even more frequently. In short, the "sociological vision" is now an integral part of the scientific identity. But visions change. Now that life has put some exceptionally difficult tasks on the agenda, it is becoming increasingly clear that many seemingly irrefutable ideas and opinions have become mirages—theoretical[4], procedural[5, ch I], and practical. For this reason, it is more important today than ever before to look back into the past and decide where ideas based on thorough knowledge and serious consideration end and well-intentioned but far from harmless dreams begin.

Success?

The public attitude toward sociology in general fills us with optimism. Today it is not only popular—it is all the rage. Sociologists express their views in newspapers and magazines and have become characters in plays and movies. Instant-surveys are shown on television, and every viewer can watch respondents fill out their questionnaires. The "sociological vision" that has taken shape in the public mind, however, is contradictory. When people read the phrase "according to sociological data" in the newspaper, they usually expect something extraordinary. The phrase is often followed, however, by figures or statements that could never be described as amazing (for example, the statements that cultural and consumer comforts play an important role in the stabilization of a labor collective or that more people are reading works of fiction). Nevertheless, conclusions of this kind are treated as something just short of revelations. Why?

Under the conditions of less than total openness, half-truths, and few social statistics, sociological research did much to satisfy the hunger for information and the

natural need of the man of integrity to know about national concerns and to have a sense of involvement in them. Research findings were regarded not only as new information—and, what is most important, at a time when information was scarce—but also as criticism or as exposes, so to speak, of shortcomings. Public interest was also aroused by the fact that any conclusion or figure was sanctified by the authority of Science. As a result of this, people had the greatest faith in obvious hack work and even in absolutely ridiculous statements: "The possibilities for divorce must be limited"; "Arming themselves with sociological methods, the propagandists compiled a certain number of production counterplans"; and so forth. We must admit that scientists themselves helped in creating the aura of sensationalism. When many social problems were being concealed and the suggestions and appeals of sociologists were often ignored, even serious specialists sometimes could not resist the temptation to dazzle people with scandalous conclusions. Given this fact, is it any wonder that many casual researchers felt that their main function was to stir up the emotions of their clients and the public. The actual data of surveys served to some extent as a record of public opinion. Furthermore, this was not simply a matter of the subjective feelings of average citizens who had not been initiated into the mysteries of "speculative theorizing." Many research programs were speculative. Their unsophisticated authors worked according to the principle: "It is my job to conduct surveys and your job to interpret the results." And this did give people food for thought. They were enticed and intrigued by what was left unsaid: What lay behind these facts? No results, not even the most reliable ones, are capable of reflecting all of the many facets of a specific situation.

Sociologists also became proficient in another area. The results of many studies are reminiscent of "golden reveries." Conflicts in the social and spiritual development of youth grew increasingly severe, but articles in specialized and mass publications blissfully discussed the significance of the ideological tempering of the younger generation. Such phenomena as social passivity, unearned income, and alcohol abuse took on threatening dimensions, but the public was nevertheless assured of the continuous improvement of the way of life, etc.

Of course, sociology's real reputation is not only a product of these sensational elements, and certainly not of these kinds of assurances. The main role here was played by its consistent defense and promotion of the idea that social factors are of primary significance and that the individual is of colossal importance in the development of society. Its successes, however, are mainly concentrated in the sphere of ideological propaganda. Results on the level of practice have been much more modest. Consequently, the practical capabilities of sociology are also appreciated much less, if at all, by the public.

It is a paradoxical situation: Data labeled "Made in Sociology" make the rounds of newspapers and magazines and are circulated by word of mouth, but proposals

with the same trademark are ignored by administrators and by the public. Why is it that the practical work of sociologists has not left a deep impression on the public mind or, what is most important, on real life? First of all, the emphasis on newsworthy results is incompatible with the elaboration of businesslike recommendations. In the second place, many proposals in the past were mere declarations: Improve this, elevate that, strengthen this. The fundamental impossibility of incorporating these innovations was generally blamed by their originators on the absence of administrators with the necessary sociological sophistication. It is possible that there was a shortage of this, but there was no shortage of common sense, and it questioned the value of yet another piece of paper appealing for "improvement" or "enhancement" in the midst of an abundance of instructions and orders.

The incorporation of sociological proposals, just as any other new undertaking, naturally caused some problems, and the furor over this sometimes obscured real achievements. Social planning is a good example of this. After all, sociologists were the first to suggest it. Their research findings have led to the implementation of several large-scale socioeconomic programs in recent years, particularly in the spheres of demographic policy and aid to families. The general public, however, did not know that these measures had been initiated by scientists.

Under the conditions of the common practices that took shape over the last few decades in socioeconomic planning and management, organizations and departments had no interest in sociological projects. Appeals for the consideration of social factors were heard from rostrums and in newspaper articles, but the ensuing results were described, at best, as an indicator of public opinion. This was a perfect opportunity for the people who love to show off, and they used public opinion polls for this purpose. But after all, these people were only informing others of the justifiable anger respondents felt at shortcomings and of their demands for "improvement." No one had any intention of disputing scientifically established facts, not to mention public opinion. God forbid! Administrators gave specialists their full attention, nodded their assent, and sometimes concluded economic agreements. The results and conclusions were listed in official reports, and these reports were then buried under a mountain of papers. Clients were guided in their activity by other, "higher" interests and considerations rather than the ones mentioned in the sociologists' proposals. Planning on the basis of gross figures, the emphasis on authoritarian methods of management, petty-minded interference, and unwarranted regulation stifled initiative, limited the autonomy of social subjects, and restricted the legitimate interests of people and collectives. If no price was too high to pay for good results, was it necessary to calculate expenditures and losses? Why should they be given a second thought if the administration was ignoring them? In short, this provided an incentive for irresponsibility. If your house were burning down, would you wait for orders from the administration to put the fire out, especially if the

firemen had already arrived? Other negative factors were the principle of allocating only surplus resources for social programs, the atmosphere of complacency, the tendency to varnish the truth, the "effort to disregard anything that did not fit into customary patterns, and the reluctance to solve urgent socioeconomic problems"[3]. In short, many sociological initiatives were assigned the fate of good intentions from the start. "The 'idea,'" K. Marx and F. Engels stressed, "disgraces itself utterly as soon as it loses its connection with 'interest'"[1]. The matter did not reach the point of scandals, but the failure to take charge was commonplace.

The situation described above, in which problems grew increasingly severe but their resolution, including with sociological methods, was constantly delayed, was one of the main reasons for the popularity of criticism. Today it is increasingly difficult to rely on this alone: Openness and criticism have become the norm in our life. The effectiveness of restructuring efforts, however, will depend largely on the ability of administrators to ride the "sociological wave." A question arises naturally in this context: Are sociologists ready to carry out these new tasks themselves?

A Matter of Logic and the Logic of the Matter

It is completely obvious that although practice has made contradictory demands on sociology, the latter itself has still not clarified the exact relationship of the two sides and its own role in this process. Furthermore, we must admit with regret that the situation described above is largely the result of our many shortcomings and problems (theoretical, procedural, and organizational[6]). Paraphrasing Hegel's famous statement, we could say that sociologists have the reputation they deserve.

One of the main errors that have cost sociology so much is the tendency to pass off investigative research and its results as practical conclusions. Research and administrative activity might be based on the same principles, but they certainly pursue different goals[5, p 219]. The situation described above did not come into being recently or suddenly. The search for its roots should begin with a look at the social status of science. The current stage in the development of Soviet sociology is marked by a dramatic increase in empirical research. The use of special methods to collect information revealed new facets of our life that were previously unknown to social scientists. A multitude of these "preserved" problems had accumulated. The scales of research underwent a corresponding process of constant expansion, and the set of sociological concepts that had been conceived in torment in the depths of philosophy, political economy, scientific communism, and social psychology, had difficulty coping with the spontaneity of public opinion polls. Unfortunately, even today it is not every research project that can pride itself on precise theoretical guidelines and profound generalizations. This is one of the reasons why so many projects are still merely descriptive in nature. Life is moving ahead, but

specialists hardly have time to even ascertain the existence of new developments and problems. We are witnessing the discovery of the world of pop music by researchers, just as we once watched them discover the brigade contract and unearned income. The obsession with figures is also stimulated by sociology's status among the social sciences as the holder of a veritable monopoly on extremely valuable and scarce information. It was precisely the absence of competition that frequently dictated the line of least resistance.

This strategy created the illusion that the client's ignorance of certain facts and circumstances (in the presence of the uninitiated they were always referred to as "latent factors") was the main reason for the failure to solve problems. Consequently, it was enough to call a person a respondent, to survey a specific number of these respondents (the larger the group, the more "scientific" the results), to group subjective opinions with the aid of a computer, and to have the computer print out the solution to the mystery. The practical part of this research consisted solely in the act of handing the client a thick report filled with a multitude of tables and diagrams and the notorious recommendations to improve, enhance, etc. Within the framework of this "paradigm," there is another, "quieter" option. It is less popular, however. It consists essentially in the use of any information at hand, most of it labeled "average": the average number of components, of unauthorized absences, or of participants, the average wage, the average length of trips, the average number of hospital beds, etc. If the author is in a mood to criticize, the process is said to be inconsistent with requirements, standards, or public demand; if the author is in a good mood, he concludes that things are still improving in general, but certain shortcomings do exist. In any case, the practical program is similar to the recommendations in the first version.

The tendency to reduce the science of sociology to purely quantitative combinations of characteristics and their values is one of the main reasons why relations with a client begin to be dominated by the anticipation of his expectations. This gives non-sociologists reason to wonder whether the term "sociology" actually comes from the word "logos" (a body of knowledge) or perhaps from the word "lie" ["lozh"].

The declarative nature of the conclusions passed off as practical recommendations was largely a product of the situation that had taken shape in the sphere of theory. Its main function was seen as the generalization of an uninterrupted flow of empirical facts. This stimulated a lopsided approach, focusing on general aspects of social development, and the oversimplified interpretation of these aspects as the only valid representatives of reality on the analytical level.

From the purely scientific standpoint, the desire to disclose the general aspects of various processes is quite understandable, but at a time when appeals and discussions calling for the implementation of the theoretical

principles of Marxism were many in number "but matters were at a virtual standstill"[2], when scientific premises took on the features of ideological cliches, and when the need for the creative development of Marxism was declared but attempts to pose new theoretical questions were frequently viewed as departures from "sacred truths"—under these conditions, there was a tendency to categorize any new phenomenon, either consciously or unconsciously, as part of a known group and to prove that a particular process was part of the mainstream. Anything that did not fit into conventional patterns (individual labor, informal associations of young people, unearned income, etc.) was categorized as a problem or as a regrettable obstacle standing in the way of fundamental tendencies. The purity and immutability of the laws themselves were carefully guarded in a unique manner. Instead of analyzing the specific mechanisms of their manifestation, researchers confined themselves to abstract statements about the existence and decisive role of objective laws.

From the standpoint of logic, these "expository" discussions essentially represented links in a chain of increasingly lofty abstractions, ending in the assertion that the only thing we can know about social phenomena is the fact that they exist. What a new and useful idea for the sociologist! This kind of logic is also far from harmless when it comes to practice. It oversimplifies the diversity of real life, absolutizes existing forms of social organization, imposes abstract patterns, having nothing to do with real life, on administrators, and disorients them. The appeal to raise common consciousness to the level of scientific consciousness can always be found, for example, on the pages of social science works. The line of reasoning in this case is the following. One of the natural results of socialist construction is the elevated consciousness of the members of society. Since science is the highest of the existing forms of consciousness (and, furthermore, is associated exclusively with knowledge), the goal is absolutely obvious. Common consciousness and scientific consciousness, however, are overlapping but different "dimensions" of social consciousness, each form of which performs specific functions of its own. The belief that the scientific view of the world should be the pivotal point of both forms is a different matter. This approach, however, is certainly not identical to the abovementioned demand. I hope the reader will forgive me for taking the liberty of saying that the latter reminds me of the old army joke about digging a trench from the post to dinner. On a more serious note, we must say that this helped to isolate ideological indoctrinational work from the realities of life, to promote the spread of the declarative style in propaganda, and to substitute hackneyed phrases and fanciful campaigns for sober judgments.

The overemphasis on general features and the general nature of social processes leads to the underestimation and misinterpretation of another fundamental issue. Many of the most serious phenomena in our life—the irresponsible attitude toward work, culture, and nature,

the sluggishness of management, the inadequate development of the political and moral culture, and the gap between needs and the means of their satisfaction—are part of the problem of the subject. Regrettably, sociologists cannot be given the credit for this discovery; in any case, our theoretical analyses of the matter are obviously long overdue. Yes, respondents, groups and communities, social subjects and the subjects of social relations are never absent from the pages of books and magazines. Whole mountains of literature have been written about the individual. All of these many variations on the theme, however, have obscured the main thing—interests, the forms of their recognition and realization, the goals of action, and the means of their attainment. In the most precise terms, the approach described above transfers the problem to the level of the relationship between objective and subjective facets of social development. The subjective element in groups, communities and so forth is usually associated with something accidental, unpredictable, non-existent, temporary, or even inconsistent with fundamental trends. This reduces the subjective to the individual. The objective, on the other hand, is traditionally connected with the fact that the individual or the group is only part of the whole and only one element of the general entity. Interests are no joke. Of course, their analysis, consideration, and coordination are an extremely difficult matter, but it is no help at all to rely on artificial schemes separating the subject from interest.

Alone in the Crowd

There is another side to this problem—the matter of scientific ethics. The definition of the subject (whether it is an individual or a community) as the main protagonist of social development, its content, and its goals is inseparable from the acknowledgement of personal responsibility for the results of scientific projects and their moral implications. Unfortunately, this issue has gradually been obscured and overshadowed by research programs, huge sample groups, and the corresponding “conclusions.” Sociologists have accepted the rules of the game: Everyone around us is fulfilling plans, completing tasks, and achieving goals. And we are no worse than the others. We provide the scientific reinforcement for the fulfillment, completion, and achievement. The main thing is to make the indicators visible, and whatever lies behind them is low on our list of priorities. We also compose recommendations, and these are submitted for someone’s consideration, are approved by someone, are made the basis of someone’s decision, and are then acted upon (or not) by someone. As a result, no one is held accountable. Could this be the reason for our completely non-binding proposals and far-fetched theoretical conclusions? This could be the reason for the deviations from one of the most important humanist principles of science: The scientist who takes a clear-cut and civic-minded stance on any matter he discusses is meeting the requirements of morality and of truth.

Sociological truths are simple—in the sense that they are revealed in the midst of people and are expected to serve

them. In any case, this is how matters should be but this is far from always how they are. The proposal that an unsociable worker who is always criticizing shortcomings be transferred to another shop, for example, only seems simple and natural at first glance. It is just as superficial as the ultimatum deduced from public opinion polls for the elimination of shortcomings. It is true that the decision could be preceded by colossal efforts and the use of the most sophisticated methods and complex theoretical models (this does happen). Only proposals which become part of the realities of life, however, can be regarded as final results. What is important for the sociologist is “not only a profound *understanding* of problems, but also their *direct* expression in comprehensible terms. Comprehensible does not mean simple; this is a matter of comprehensible language, and this certainly does not mean that complexity has to be sacrificed for the sake of accessibility.... It is the aim of science to *teach*, and not to be a form of correspondence between specialists”[7].

The problem of translating sociological conclusions into the language of administrative decisions and of demonstrating their applicability to the situation of those to whom the recommendations are addressed is more pressing today than ever before. Various social technologies are seen as the main solution, but this problem must be examined in the broader sociocultural context. One of the main factors impeding the transformation of scientific principles into real actions is the identification of professional thinking exclusively with the group of ideas comprehensible to only a select few, and professional activity with the employment of these (whether they take the form of concepts or indicators). The artificiality of this situation is indisputable, and it is not only because research aims are influenced by the personal experience and common beliefs of the specialist. The paradox lies elsewhere. These beliefs are often passed off as scientific premises. As long as scientific thinking is associated with the loftiest abstractions and carefully polished phrases, every effort will be made to disown common sense. No one wants to be accused of subjectivism or dilettantism.

By denying the right of common sense to participate in professional activity, we take the risk of lapsing into doctrinaire statements and scholastic theorizing, and thereby sacrificing the humanistic function of sociology, because it must ultimately appeal to the reason and emotions of people. Life is knocking on science’s door in the hope of bold and highly professional conclusions, and no one else will make them for us.

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Effects of 'Limited' Permits (On the Employment of Workers from Out of Town at the Head Enterprise of the AvtoZIL Association)

18060005k Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 80-85

[Article by Vladimir Serafimovich Dunin, junior researcher at the Academy of the National Economy of the USSR Council of Ministers and author of the article in our journal "The Quantitative Evaluation of the Performance of Line Managers in the Primary Production Collective" (1978, No 4, co-authored), and Eduard Alfonsovich Zenkevich, senior engineer and sociologist in the Social Research Laboratory of the Moscow Motor Vehicle Plant imeni I.A. Likhachev. This is his first article for our journal]

[Text] As we know, a decision was made at the beginning of this year to stop attracting workers from out of town to Moscow enterprises by offering them temporary (or "limited") residential permits[1]. Does this mean that the problem of the so-called "limited workers" is a closed chapter? Certainly not. In the first place, it was never even opened in the scientific sense. Studies of this topic can be counted on one's fingers[2]. In the second place, the issue is still being discussed in several ministries and enterprises. In the third place, the effects of the "limited permits" will be felt for a long time. Suffice it to say that in the last few years around 60,000 workers from out of town joined various organizations in the capital each year[3]. Finally, this problem is characteristic not only of

Moscow, but also of several other large industrial centers (for example, Leningrad and Kiev) and regions of new development.

The object of our study is one of the largest enterprises in the capital—the Moscow Motor Vehicle Plant imeni I.A. Likhachev (the AvtoZIL Association). In 1965 the plant began recruiting workers from out of town because of the dramatic aggravation of the manpower shortage in Moscow and the need to produce more trucks of the new ZIL-130 model. In 1971 new workers from other cities exceeded the number of new Muscovites hired, and by 1980 they represented almost 60 percent of all new personnel. It is interesting that it was precisely in those years that the plant's output of its main products doubled while the number of workers on the head plant's industrial team increased by only 16 percent. In the next 3 years a slight reduction in production volume led to a reduction in the number employed. In 1986 the vehicle output reached the 1980 figure—i.e., double the 1965 figure—but the number of workers exceeded the 1965 figure by only 7 percent. The percentage of workers from out of town among all newcomers fell to 52 percent. We should say a few words about the composition of this group. The workers come from virtually all parts of the country, but most of them come from the RSFSR: 41 percent from the central region (including 15 percent from Moscow Oblast), 9 percent from the cis-Volga region, 8 percent from the central chernozem zone, and 7 percent from the Volga-Vyatsk region. Many young workers come from the Ukrainian SSR—10 percent—and the transcaucasian republics—7 percent. Around 54 percent come from cities or urban settlements, and 46 percent come from rural communities (people from rural locations represented from 60 to 80 percent of all newly hired workers in the prewar years and the first years after the war). Most of the new workers are young people from families with a history of primarily physical labor (78 percent).

The recruitment of workers from out of town is connected primarily with the "aging" of the Moscow population and the decrease in the number of working-age residents. In spite of the ZIL personnel office's considerable efforts in the sphere of vocational guidance and public relations, Muscovites are reluctant to apply for jobs at the enterprise. Here are some extremely indicative data for the last 3 years. Around 30 percent of the new workers were people who had been sent to the plant by labor agencies or on the orders of rayispolkom administrative commissions. As a rule, these are inveterate violators of labor discipline, people inclined to abuse alcohol, and "rolling-stones." Approximately 14 percent are retired, 5 percent are graduates of general educational schools, and just over 6 percent are graduates of vocational and technical institutes. Furthermore, the latter are drafted into the armed forces soon afterward, and only 16-18 percent return to the plant after serving in the army. The quality of this manpower, representing

55 percent of the new Muscovite workers, far from meets the requirements of mass assembly line production with its intensive and inflexible work rhythm.

At the beginning of the 1970's students from driving schools, tekhnikums, and VUZ's and workers from motor transport enterprises in other parts of the country, especially from the Central Asian and transcaucasian regions with a labor surplus, began to be recruited for up to 2 months of temporary work at the plant. Besides this, people receiving treatment in the municipal substance abuse clinic began to be employed in the 1980's. They undergo 6 months of occupational therapy at the enterprise. In 1986 "temporary" workers (including the patients of the drug rehabilitation clinic) were working in 29 subdivisions of the head plant and represented 12 percent of all the workers on the industrial team, including 19 percent of the workers in the main production subdivisions and 3 percent of the workers in auxiliary subdivisions (see Table 1). In some of the main areas of the plant the proportional number of these workers reached 20-25 percent, and they represented more than a third of the workers on one of the main assembly lines. In general, the absolute and relative numbers of temporary workers have been rising steadily since 1975.

Table 1: Breakdown of Plant Workers in 1986, Percentages

Type of production	Workers with permanent Moscow residential permit	Workers with temporary Moscow permit	Temporary workers (including patients of drug rehabilitation clinic)
Total industrial team	39.0	49.0	12.0
Main production subdivisions	33.0	48.0	19.0
Auxiliary production subdivisions	47.0	50.0	3.0

These processes had conflicting effects on the sociodemographic and professional structure of the collective. The technical-organizational and economic conditions of the plant's operations for the last 20 years played an important role here. During this period the number of women among the workers from out of town rose dramatically—from 14 percent in 1967 to 49 percent in 1986. The number of people between the ages of 20 and 24 declined (from 96 percent to 68 percent), while there was a rise in the number of young people under the age of 20 (this was also a case of more new women workers) and people over 25 (see Table 2).

Table 2: Sociodemographic Breakdown of Permanent Personnel of Head Plant, Percentages

Years	Men	Women	Under 20	20-29	30-49	50-59	60 and over
1960	59.1	40.9	7.5	33.6	48.7	9.5	0.7
1965	61.3	38.7	9.5	25.2	48.5	15.0	1.8
1970	61.8	38.2	6.6	33.5	43.9	13.0	3.0
1975	60.5	39.5	5.4	45.4	32.3	11.3	5.6
1980	57.1	42.9	4.6	47.7	26.7	15.9	5.1
1985	56.2	43.8	2.9	43.0	33.6	14.1	6.4
1986	57.1	42.9	2.4	41.5	35.9	13.4	6.8

Young people from out of town usually replace more mature Muscovites (from 31 to 49). One of the main reasons is the intensive development of experimental production in Moscow in the last 15 or 20 years. At the ZIL, however, there is a prevalence of mass assembly line production with a strictly controlled rhythm. It is indicative that the wages for 50 percent of the jobs in the association's Moscow plants are calculated according to rates for heavy and hazardous labor. The members of this group—these are generally the most highly skilled and highly trained personnel—leave the ZIL and move to jobs offering better working conditions, more meaningful work, higher wages, and various types of benefits (especially housing).

The young people with "limited" permits also have a good educational background. In the last 20 years the number of workers from out of town with a secondary

education doubled and the number with a secondary specialized education more than quadrupled. Today 11 percent of the members of this group have a partial secondary education, 78 percent have a general secondary education, and 11 percent have a secondary specialized, partial higher, or higher education. On the whole, the number of workers with at least a secondary education increased 6.6-fold between 1960 and 1986. This has become the largest group. Table 3 indicates that the number of people with at least a secondary education is particularly high in the group of workers under 30. In 1965 the average skill category was 3.3, but in 1986 it had risen to 3.7. During the same period the number of workers with low skills (categories I and II) was reduced by half, and there was a rise in the proportional numbers of people with average (III and IV) skills—from 46 to 58 percent—and high (V and VI) skills—from 22 to 25 percent.

Table 3: Educational Level of Permanent Personnel, Percentages (I— In the Plant at Large; II—Among Workers Under 30), dashes indicate statistically insignificant data

Years	Elementary (under 7 years): I	II	Partial sec- ondary (7-9 years): I	II	General sec- ondary: I	II	Secondary specialized: I	II	Higher and incomplete higher: I	II
1960	53.5	43.6	36.4	43.0	8.4	11.3	1.4	1.8	0.3	0.3
1965	41.2	24.8	44.8	53/5	12.0	19.0	1.4	1.8	0.6	0.9
1970	31.4	10.0	42.7	47.5	23.1	38.7	2.0	2.4	0.8	1.4
1975	21.2	0.5	38.3	33.4	37.0	62.0	2.7	2.9	0.8	1.2
1980	14.1	0.1	28.7	14.3	52.3	80.0	4.2	4.8	0.7	0.8
1985	11.0	—	24.1	7.2	58.6	86.0	5.2	5.3	1.1	1.5
1986	10.1	—	23.2	5.9	60.4	87.1	5.5	5.5	0.8	1.5

The proportional number of workers with over 10 years of service rose at the ZIL between the end of the 1950's and the middle of the 1960's—from 35 percent in 1959 to 42 percent in 1967—just as it did in machine building and metalworking in general[4]. The widespread employment of young people from out of town caused the number to drop to the 1959 level in 1981. There was a simultaneous but slow rise in the number of people with from 2 to 10 years of service. This meant that the group of young out-of-towners was gradually becoming a permanent part of the enterprise staff. Today 42 percent of the workers—that is, as many as in 1967—have been working at the plant for more than 10 years. In the group of workers hired at the plant on "limited" permits between 1965 and 1986 as a whole, 33 percent are still working, 55 percent have resigned and are no longer in Moscow, and 12 percent have moved to other enterprises in the capitol after acquiring a Moscow residence permit and housing (rented rooms in the case of workers with small families or separate dwellings) during their term of service at the plant. In particular, one-third of the out-of-towners at the plant have been working there from 5 to 10 years, and the same number have been there over 10 years. The majority are under 30 (64 percent) or in their 30's (33 percent), and 53 percent of them are women.

This is a general overview of the changes the collective underwent as a result of the recruitment of workers from out of town. An understanding of the significance of these changes necessitates their examination in the context of the socioeconomic situation. First of all, we should note that the rising educational and skill levels of workers, especially young ones, lead to higher expectations with regard to the conditions and content of labor. Labor-intensive processes at the plant are being mechanized, automated, and robotized. Nevertheless, the ZIL still has an acute need for semiskilled and even unskilled workers. Under the conditions of mass assembly line production the number of jobs requiring highly skilled labor is relatively low. The problem is compounded by the insufficiently balanced age structure of the collective. The predominance of young workers slows down their professional advancement. Besides this, on-the-job training is essential in many cases. For example, it takes from

3 to 5 years to train a skilled tool maker or repairman (and the demand for these is constantly rising). Naturally, the wages of these young people in the first few years are lower than those of the other people of their age working, for instance, on the assembly line. The difference can be as great as 25-30 percent, and it does not disappear until the end of the third year of work. Few workers are able to wait this long.

In addition, there are many other problems connected with wages. Here is what Deputy General Director A.I. Buzhinskiy of the association had to say about this: "About 20 years ago ZIL was among the top three large Moscow enterprises paying the highest wages. In 1984 we were already in 18th place, and now we rank 23d among the 47 largest enterprises. Each year we drop down another two or four places because some enterprises enter the wage 'race' with the help of their ministries and use this method to solve the problem of manpower in a big city"[5]. This is one of the reasons why people leave the plant. We should clarify that the people who move to "higher-paying" enterprises are those who are able to do so—that is, native Muscovites. They represent only 15-20 percent of the personnel of subdivisions with a predominance of assembly or simple routine work on machine tools (the number of "temporary" workers on the assembly lines ranges from 50 to 70 percent). Here is another indicative fact: Between 1965 and 1986 the wages paid to the group of production workers where "temporary" and "limited" workers outnumber the Muscovites rose 71 percent, while the wages of auxiliary workers rose 75 percent. The difference has been more pronounced in recent years. Between 1980 and 1986 the wages of the first group rose at a rate of 8 percent, while the figure for the second group was 14 percent. Furthermore, a correlative analysis testifies that there is a stable and fairly strong connection between the number of "temporary" workers in a subdivision and the size of the wage. (The paired correlation rate ranged from -0.675 to -0.7 between 1980 and 1985.) In addition, the demand for auxiliary workers is constantly rising. They are needed for the adjustment, maintenance, and repair of not only the new, highly productive equipment, but also and especially the worn and outdated equipment

(in 1986 almost two-fifths of the equipment in the plant was over 20 years old). It was no coincidence that the number of auxiliary workers increased by 19 percent during this period while the number of production workers decreased by 9 percent.

Therefore, on the one hand, the out-of-towners and temporary workers are rescuing the plant, but on the other, their employment aggravates many problems connected with the organization and conditions of labor. Furthermore, these problems are most likely to affect the workers on "limited" permits. The mere fact that ZIL is located in Moscow cannot compensate for shortcomings in the organization of labor and wages for long. Eloquent testimony to this can be found in the previously cited data on the high turnover rate among workers from out of town. One of the distinctive features of the situation is the fact that the dominant motive for taking jobs at ZIL is the desire to live and work in Moscow (this was the motive named by two-thirds of the respondents). It is far from the only motive, however, and there are usually several others. Many young people (57 percent) hoped to combine academic studies with their work, many were striving for higher skills and wages or a good specialty, and many came in search of interesting and meaningful work and better housing conditions. During the first year of work, however, it is precisely the young workers who were motivated primarily by the desire to live in Moscow, to combine work with academic studies, or to pursue other goals not connected with production that are most likely to resign. The turnover rate in this group is from 10 to 20 percent higher than in all others.

The resolution of the production and social problems engendered by the effects of the "limited" permit must begin with a consideration of the manpower situation in Moscow. The proportional number of industrial production personnel in the municipal economy decreased from 33.2 percent in 1965 to 25.2 percent in 1984, and the size of the group remained virtually unchanged. The proportional number of people employed in non-production sectors, science, and culture rose from 45.5 percent to 52.6 percent during the same period[6]. This perceptible rise was made possible only by the recruitment of workers from out of town, who replaced the native Muscovites in jobs with poor working conditions, highly intensive labor, and relatively low wages. A radical change in the situation will first necessitate the mechanization and automation of labor-intensive production processes and the better management of socioeconomic processes. Without this, the complete and sudden refusal to recruit out-of-towners could lead to serious interruptions in the work, especially in a giant enterprise like ZIL.

The need for retooling at the association is particularly urgent. Here is what General Director Ye.A. Brakov of the association said in this connection: "The sum of a billion rubles was immediately allocated for the remodeling of a new plant in our industry (he is referring to the Volga Motor Vehicle Plant—Ed.). For 70 years ZIL has

been making a profit for the state and now it needs to be remodeled, but we are not receiving the funds we need. We have so much equipment that has been operating for more than 25 years. It seems as though we have not earned enough to cover the cost of replacing our equipment, but who could accuse us of unsatisfactory work? ...An efficiently operating enterprise should have the final word in these matters"[7]. In 1987 the association made the transition to self-funding and full cost accounting, and it is within this framework that the plant will have to solve many problems, including the difficult personnel problem. Under these conditions the reduction of the number of out-of-towners should be gradual and should be made, obviously, with a view to the city's interests.

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Causes of Socioeconomic Losses in Production
180600051 Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSEDOVANIYA in
Russian No 3, May-Jun 87 (signed to press 7 May 87) pp 85-89

[Article by Vyacheslav Stepanovich Afanasyev, junior researcher at the Scientific Research Institute of Comprehensive Social Studies at Leningrad State University imeni A.A. Zhdanov. This is his first article for our journal]

[Text] In 1983 and 1984 the Scientific Research Institute of Comprehensive Social Studies of Leningrad State University imeni A.A. Zhdanov studied ways of reducing the socioeconomic losses of labor resources in Petrozavodsk. When the workers of 14 enterprises (1,574

people) were surveyed, they were asked about the types of negative behavior encountered most frequently in their labor collectives (the suggested responses were: unauthorized absences, tardiness, departures before the end of the work day, arrival at work in an intoxicated state, defects caused by worker negligence, the embezzlement of socialist property, rudeness to subordinates, and disturbances of the peace). The responses with the highest scores were violations resulting directly in losses of work time: tardiness—27 percent, unauthorized absences—21 percent, and early departures—12 percent. Actual losses from unauthorized absences at the enterprises surveyed, according to the research data, totaled around 14,000 work days a year on the average, or approximately half a day for each worker. Cases of tardiness, temporary absence, and early departures from work are not recorded as precisely, but selective data indicate that the number of cases of tardiness and early departures is from 5 to 10 times as high as the number of unauthorized absences. This increases total losses perceptibly.

Violations committed as a result of alcohol abuse represent a special form of deviant behavior. They accounted for 20 percent of the responses in our survey. When respondents were asked whether they agreed that drinking alcoholic beverages on the job was a big problem, 85 percent said yes, 3 percent were undecided, and 12 percent said no. When they were asked whether they agreed with the statement: "If I drink a little wine at lunchtime, this will not affect the quality of my work," 13 percent said yes, 12 percent were undecided, and 75 percent said no.

Alcohol abuse, which is responsible for most disturbances of the peace, reduces labor productivity by 20-30 percent[1]. The unauthorized absences due to drunkenness lead to losses of work time totaling millions of man-days in construction, industry, and agriculture[2]. Each ruble earned from the sale of alcoholic beverages results in losses of 1.5-3 rubles for the national economy[3].

The theft of socialist property also inflicts material damages on enterprises[4]. Cases of the theft of socialist property were confirmed by 74 percent of the respondents from the Petrozavodsk Fish Combine[5]. The frequency of embezzlement, in contrast to other forms of negative behavior, was acknowledged as minimal (2 percent of the responses), however. Apparently, the disparity is connected with the more tolerant attitude toward embezzlement than toward other violations of the law.

Enterprises incur large material losses as a result of defective production. These losses exceeded 300 million rubles in 1983 in 11 union industrial ministries[6]. Production defects caused by worker negligence ranked fifth among the nine responses (9 percent).

According to the data of the USSR Central Statistical Administration, the plan for sales of manufactured goods with consideration for delivery schedules was fulfilled by 98.9 percent during the first 6 months of 1986. Undelivered products were valued at 3.8 billion rubles; one out of every four industrial enterprises violated the terms of contracts[7]. The fines paid annually by the surveyed enterprises in Petrozavodsk for non-delivery ranged from 70,000 rubles to 750,000 rubles.

Unionwide statistics indicate that intra-shift or whole-shift losses of work time exceed one-tenth of total work time in industry[8]. Annual losses of work time due to unauthorized absences at the surveyed enterprises in the city total around 12,500 work days. They are usually covered by overtime work. In the last 2 years more than 500 million rubles was spent in industry to pay for overtime work[9]. The average annual volume of overtime work at the surveyed enterprises in Petrozavodsk amounted to around 20,000 days.

These statistics are taken from official enterprise reports. They require some clarification if they are to reveal the actual state of affairs. Almost half of the violations of labor discipline in the production collectives in Petrozavodsk were ignored by the administration. Unauthorized absences have traditionally been regarded as the main reason for losses of work time, but our research indicated that temporary absences from the workplace without the permission of the administration are the leading cause. Intra-shift losses for this reason represent almost 20 percent of all work time. This is almost 20 times as great as the losses from unauthorized absences, downtime, and authorized absences!

Personnel turnover is an important indicator of socioeconomic losses. The average annual rate of personnel turnover throughout the country is around 20 percent[10]. It was 18 percent at the enterprises we surveyed.

As for potential turnover, three of the questions in our survey were designed to reveal it. When respondents were asked whether they would like to transfer to another enterprise, 57 percent said no, 17 percent said yes, and 26 percent were undecided. When they were asked to choose statements consistent with their opinions, 45 percent chose "I like everything about this enterprise," 38 percent chose "There are some things I do not like here," 6 percent chose "There are more things to dislike than to like about this enterprise," 3 percent chose "I do not like anything about this enterprise," and 8 percent were undecided. When they were asked whether they would return to this enterprise if they had to seek jobs in the future, 40 percent said yes, 21 percent said no, and 39 percent were undecided. Therefore, potential turnover ranges from 17 to 21 percent and is consistent with the actual rate of turnover.

These are the main types of losses of work time. Intra-shift losses are the leader among them: Losses connected with temporary absences from the workplace without the permission of the administration—19 percent, losses from illness and industrial accidents—8 percent, and losses from authorized absences, downtime, and unauthorized absences—1 percent. Losses of work time in general represent, according to our data, 28 percent of all work time.

Shortcomings in the organization of labor are the main reason for these losses. The work of less than half of the respondents at the Petrozavodsk enterprises surveyed is organized well. The motives for violations of this kind are understandable: When there is no work, the person can do what he wants, especially since this will have no effect whatsoever on his wages. As for the administration, if it cannot organize the work of people properly, it loses the right to administer the penalties envisaged by law.

Alcohol abuse and alcoholism were ranked second among these factors by the experts. This factor, however, is indirectly related to the organization of labor. Rush work at the end of the month requires a considerable amount of physical and mental energy, and alcohol is often used as one way of compensating for this. Labor productivity at enterprises with an irregular rhythm declines by 15-30 percent after the payment of wages and the subsequent drunkenness and unauthorized absences[11]. Poor organization has a direct effect on the productivity of labor. In the absence of a regular production rhythm, workers begin preparing in advance for the inevitable rush work at the end of the month: They conserve their energy and build up a supply of components, crude resources, and materials for the highly intensive work ahead.

The emotional and psychological climate in the collective also depends on the organization of labor: It grows more strained as the rhythm grows more irregular.

What was the rhythm of the production process at the enterprises surveyed? Losses of work time due to irregularities in the labor process during the shift represented 17 percent on the average (we should remember that total losses of work time are equivalent to 28 percent). Consequently, irregularities in the production process are the reason for almost 70 percent of all losses of work time (and this figure is based only on irregularities during a shift). These data are corroborated by the results of other studies, which testify that irregular operations can reduce the productivity of labor by 20 percent on the average.

New cases of the declining level of labor organization have been revealed in recent years. For example, whereas most of the unauthorized absences at enterprises with irregular production in the 1970's took place during the first 10 days of the month, when only minimum production requirements were being satisfied, most of the

unauthorized absences in the 1980's have taken place in the last third of the month, when the output is particularly large[12]. The tolerance of unauthorized absences at the beginning of the month to compensate for the chaotic production process leads unavoidably to violations of labor discipline.

Another negative tendency was also discovered. Whereas most of the violations of labor discipline in the 1970's were committed by young unmarried workers with an incomplete secondary education and a low skill rating, in the 1980's the average age of violators of labor discipline, the level of their education, and their monthly wage have risen[13]. Our research confirms this tendency. This kind of "improvement" in the sociodemographic features of violators testifies, in our opinion (just as the prevalence of unauthorized absences at the end of the month), to a seriously lower level of labor organization.

When the respondents in Petrozavodsk were asked about their average percentage of output norm fulfillment, 27 percent said it was from 101 to 110 percent, 12 percent said from 111 to 120 percent, 8 percent said from 121 to 130 percent, and 5 percent said it was over 130 percent. This means that more than 50 percent of the respondents overfulfill output norms. This naturally raises questions about the validity of these norms and about the degree to which they stimulate more productive labor. We should recall that intra-shift losses of work time at the enterprises surveyed represent around one-fifth of all work time. If production plans are fulfilled and overfulfilled in spite of these losses, labor norms and plan assignments are obviously understated. This is indirectly corroborated by the results of our survey: Only 49 percent of the respondents were satisfied with their work norms, 45 percent were satisfied with their wages, 46 percent were satisfied with the distribution of bonuses, 50 percent were satisfied with the skill evaluation procedure, and 38 percent were satisfied with the system of moral incentives.

The wage differentiation mechanism has some extremely significant defects. First of all, the rise of the average wage is generally connected with the centralized revision of wage scales, and not with the enhancement of labor efficiency or the improvement of product quality. In the second place, only a few geographic and technical-economic factors, and not social ones, are taken into account. In the third place, the level of wages frequently depends not on norms and scales, but on the prevailing standard of living in the region, irrespective of the actual skills of the worker and the intensity of his labor. The wages of workers in professions suffering from a labor shortage were once increased according to plan but are now increased haphazardly[14].

Experts listed inadequate skills, the absence of mechanization, and monotonous operations as the third contributing factor, following labor norms and wages. Around 72 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the skill level of the work they performed, 76 percent were

satisfied with the content of work, 65 percent were satisfied with its degree of diversity, 36 percent were satisfied with the state of equipment, 34 percent were satisfied with the quality of instruments, and only 29 percent were satisfied with the mechanization of labor.

The survey of experts pointed up the importance of components of the regional social infrastructure—the sphere of family living and leisure pursuits, particularly unfavorable changes in family and marital relations (divorces, conflicts, the low birthrate, and the high percentage of unstable and broken homes), and disparities between the population's need for goods and services and the possibility of its satisfaction. The negative role of poor housing conditions and shortcomings in the organization of the work of transport and cultural establishments is quite noticeable. For example, only 29 percent of the respondents were satisfied with their amount of living area, 17 percent were satisfied with the number of rooms, and 10 percent were satisfied with the quality of housing operation office services. Frequent violations of the schedule of public transport, which is used by half of all the workers, were cited by 67 percent of the respondents.

Our study confirmed that violations of the law and the socioeconomic losses they cause are dependent on factors in the workplace and the home. Measures to optimize them should be included in plans for the economic and social development of labor collectives. The main preventive measures in the sphere of labor will entail the establishment of a regular production rhythm, the incorporation and improvement of brigade forms of labor organization and incentives, the development of socialist competition, the creation of the necessary conditions for the professional growth of workers, the establishment of broader opportunities to combine professions, the improvement of labor norms and wages, and the improvement of methods of administration and the style of management. It will also be necessary to coordinate plans for the social and economic development of labor collectives closely with plans for regional development. The implementation of these plans will serve as a basis for the prevention of violations.

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Letters to Editor

18060005m Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSEDOVANIYA in
Russian No 3, May-Jun 87 (signed to press 7 May 87) pp 120-123

[Letters to editor from V.T. Zhurakhovskiy, senior engineer in the Center for the Scientific Organization of Labor and Management of the USSR Ministry of the Radio Industry, with response by V.M. Yakushev, and from I.B. Chubays, candidate of philosophical sciences and docent in the School of Philosophy and Scientific Communism of the State Theatrical Arts Institute imeni A.V. Lunacharskiy]

[Text]

Socialist Competition Must Be Based on Actual Economic Conditions—Letter from V.T. Zhurakhovskiy

The article "An Experiment in Strengthening the Connection Between Financial and Moral Incentives and Socialist Competition"[3] relates the experience in using

fundamentally new ways of organizing socialist competition and financial incentives in the labor collectives of the All-Union Fishing Association of the Northern Basin (the Sevryba VRPO). What is new about the experiment is the considerable increase in the bonuses paid out according to the results of the socialist competition and in the number of winners—from 80 to 100 percent of all participants. The effectiveness of these innovations is confirmed by the higher level of production plan fulfillment and of labor productivity than in other fishing associations. And this is quite significant. When socialist competition is organized in this way, there is no financial incentive to conceal reserves and to strive for an understated production plan. All participants in the labor process have a vested interest in good results, and it is therefore understandable that violations of discipline and order have decreased dramatically.

We can confidently say that the experiment is a great event in the economic life of our country. This is due not to its dimensions (the number of participants is not that great), but to the correspondence of the nature of this competition to the best possible development patterns for our economy, accomplished by stimulating public enthusiasm in all spheres of social activity. We could say that Sevryba has taken an important step in mastering the method of accelerating economic development by applying the law of distribution according to labor.

The reinforcement of the connection between "financial and moral incentives and socialist competition"[3, p 59] and the unification of "competition with distribution according to labor"[*ibid.*, p 66] are accomplished, the article says, on the basis of the "labor norm—competition—remuneration" pattern. But it is not clear how the remuneration for work is calculated. What happens is that only the bonus depends on the results of competition, and the actual amount of the bonus is established before the work begins. This means that the bonus cannot depend directly on the effectiveness of labor and makes rewards for victory non-objective. For example, although two collectives perform almost equally effective work, the members of one receive a bonus and the members of the other do not, and this is inconsistent with the law of distribution according to labor. If the method used in the VRPO to reward victory in socialist competition were to be extended to the entire wage, 20 percent of the workers would get no money at all, because the bonuses are paid to "up to 80 percent of the participants in the labor competition"[3, p 61].

The authors of the article suggest that the same pattern be used for the distribution of "bonus funds from the wage fund"[*ibid.*], which constitutes a high percentage of earnings. It is hard to believe that one-fifth of the collective would agree to work without a bonus for the basic results of labor. Only the distribution of all wages with a view to the effectiveness of the labor of production workers in comparison with its socially necessary results will produce a form of competition suited to socialism.

The theoretical and practical inconsistency of the experiment's organizers can also be seen in the fact that, on the one hand, they use terms and categories based on commodity and money relations—commercial value, the value of the commercial product, direct material expenditures, and the integral indicator of economic effectiveness—and, on the other, they completely agree with M.S. Langshteyn's opinion that "the evaluation of the performance of socialist enterprises according to profits (or profitability) will always be like a defective mirror, distorting the labor contribution of production collectives instead of reflecting it"[4, p 35]. Is it possible that profits and profitability do not represent a synthesis of the indicators employed with such success in the experiment? For this reason, it would be better not to refute these integral indicators of economic activity but to determine why they serve only as a "distorting mirror" and how this can be corrected.

Competition encompassing the entire system of distributive relations could generate the greatest enthusiasm, but in the experiment in question the results of competition have no effect on most of the wages of the personnel of Sevryba production subdivisions, all of the wages of managerial personnel, and some other distributive relations.

In spite of this, the new form of competition has aroused considerable enthusiasm, reaffirming the colossal potential of the socialist method of production. Wherever the practice concerns at least one of the elements of distributive relations, economic development grows stronger and more dynamic. The Sevryba experiment is based on changes in only two elements of the system of distributive relations—the formation of the financial incentive fund and the bonuses paid for socialist competition. If the experiment could also extend to wages, we could expect participants in the competition to be even more active.

The editors asked V.M. Yakushev, one of the authors of the article on the Sevryba Association experiment, to respond to the questions raised in V.T. Zhurakhovskiy's letter. His reply is printed below.

In his letter, V.T. Zhurakhovskiy has quite accurately pointed to the two most difficult problems encountered by the organizers of the experiment in the Sevryba VRPO. The first is the question of why the results of the competition affect only financial incentive funds and not the wage fund. The second problem is connected with the possibility of using an integral indicator to evaluate the performance of participants in the competition.

When we organized the experiment we felt that around 20 percent of the total payroll should be distributed according to competition results. But this was the ideal, so to speak. In reality, we had to fit our experiment into the normal functioning of an existing labor collective without interfering with its work. For this reason, we had to consider the existing remuneration procedure and the

objections voiced by experts on labor and wages. They mainly objected to the extension of the experimental conditions to the wage fund, as this would require significant changes in the existing procedure for the calculation of labor results and wages, and this would have been risky in view of the impossibility of predicting the impact of the experiment. For this reason, during the initial phase, which was discussed in the article, a compromise was in order, and the wage fund was not involved in our experiment. Now, however, concrete steps are being taken to link distribution according to competition results with the wage fund.

Now I will say a few words about the integral indicator.

Two approaches can be taken to the comparison of the performance of labor collectives: the analytical approach, in which all of the main factors of effectiveness are compared separately, and the synthetic approach, in which one comprehensive indicator is the basis of comparison.

The analytical approach is complicated because the indicators used in summing up the results sometimes undergo changes of varying intensity and direction. For example, the conservation of raw materials could be accompanied by the deterioration of quality, the deterioration of quality could secure the reduction of overhead costs, the fulfillment of the profit plan could be the result of the non-fulfillment of the assortment plan, etc. Under the conditions of these diverse changes, results calculated on the basis of separate indicators could be subjective, and the task therefore consists not in improving all elements of effectiveness, which is highly improbable, but in finding the optimal combination, which could produce, in spite of the decline of specific indicators, a much more impressive final result than the moderate rise of all indicators. The limitations of specific criteria can be surmounted by supplementing them with a general or collective criterion, and individual indicators cannot be excluded as such because they are essential in the determination of the actual contribution of individual elements of effectiveness to the final result and, consequently, in the disclosure of reserves.

The consideration of an integral indicator also presupposes the correct approach to specific indicators with a view to their subordination to the entire group and to one another, their coverage of the entire production process, and their formation of a system rather than a random set. When heterogeneous indicators are reduced to a "common denominator," the creation of a system becomes possible. In our opinion, expenditures of work time can serve as this "common denominator," because "work time," as K. Marx wrote, "is the living reality of labor, irrespective of its form, content, and individuality"[1]. This characteristic of work time makes it suitable as a common yardstick of labor expenditures, resources, and productivity, because "any savings ultimately saves time"[2].

In our elaboration of the integral indicator we took the following facts into account.

First, each labor collective has certain resources and can produce a certain quantity of products within a specific amount of time. This is its anticipated potential, so to speak. Of course, the collective can produce more or less than the anticipated quantity. The collective producing more is using some kind of inner reserves, and the collective producing less is doing unsatisfactory work. This is one of the lines of reasoning on which the integral indicator is based. Anticipated potential is assumed to be the only external form of measurement used in comparing the results of the activity of competing collectives on the basis of a standard reflecting the technical conditions of labor rather than on the basis of individual criteria.

Second, the less labor the collective expends on the production of a certain volume, the more effectively it is working. The factors considered here include not only live labor, but also the savings in past labor (crude resources and materials), the labor of others (workers in related fields and consumers), and future labor connected with the savings derived by the society as a result of high product quality.

Therefore, the integral indicator we propose is a synthetic combination of the indicators of yield on capital and labor expenditures. In other words, we have united the norms governing the use of the means of production and the expenditure of live and embodied labor.

Our integral indicator can be expressed in this formula:

$$I = V \text{ fact.} / V \text{ norm.} \times E \text{ norm.} + Ls / E \text{ fact.} + Ae \times 100$$

Where $V \text{ fact.}$ stands for the collective's actual volume of production; $V \text{ norm.}$ stands for the volume the collective could have produced in line with norms (or estimates); $E \text{ norm.}$ stands for the expenditures of labor needed for the production of this volume in line with norms (hourly); $E \text{ fact.}$ stands for actual expenditures of labor; Ls stands for the savings in labor resulting from the manufacture of high-quality products and the conservation of crude resources, energy, and materials (hourly); Ae stands for additional expenditures of labor for the elimination of defects, including the labor expended by consumers, and the production of crude resources, energy, materials and other resources expended over and above the norms (hourly).

The integral indicator provides us with a realistic instrument for the measurement and planning of labor expenditures and of calculating labor savings and productivity on the national scale as well as on the scale of the collective in question. The collective itself can decide which areas of its activity are the most effective. In this case, preference will probably be given to measures resulting in the greatest savings in work time on the national level—i.e., measures with a national economic impact. The collective with the highest integral indicator

will be the winner of the competition. Financial rewards, however, will depend not on the value of the indicator but on the collective's competitive ranking.

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A New Type of Publication—Letter by I.B. Chubays

Television has steadily moved up in the world in recent years and journalism is becoming more pointed. Unfortunately, nothing of the kind has happened yet in the social sciences. There is not a single author writing consistently engrossing works. Interesting publications can be counted on one's fingers, and many books remain unsold in bookstores and warehouses and are never requested in libraries. There are many causes, and they certainly cannot be eliminated with a single wave of the hand. But a completely realistic step in the right direction could be taken now.

Any published author is well aware of the long and agonizing process by which a manuscript is "boiled down" in the editorial cauldron. This rarely improves a text. In each successive stage of editing the author receives new suggestions, which are frequently incompetent and mutually exclusive.

The losses of the "scientific harvest" must be reduced. I think that a new form of social science publication should be organized. I am willing to draw up the appropriate proposal so that scholars with liberal arts degrees will be able to publish their own works at their own expense on a rotary press in limited editions (of from several dozen to several hundred copies) without any discussion in editorial offices. I think that the printing facilities of the Nauka Publishing House are fully capable of coping with this technically simple task and that the collection of manuscripts and printing fees and the subsequent distribution of the copies could be taken on by a recognized authority in the field, the Soviet Sociological Association.

I will conclude this letter with the reminder that this form of "samizdat" was widely practiced in our country in the 1920's. Several of the most interesting works of A.F. Losev, K.E. Tsiolkovskiy, and other authors were published precisely in this way.

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Report and Election Conference of Soviet Sociological Association 18060005n Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE ISSEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87 (signed to press 7 May 87) p 124

[Report on conference of Soviet Sociological Association in Moscow on 24-26 March 1987]

[Text] The report and election conference of the Soviet Sociological Association was held in Moscow (24-26 March 1987). There was an exceptionally full agenda. The accountability report was presented by Academician T.I. Zaslavskaya, president of the SSA (the editors plan to publish her report in a coming issue). Doctor of Philosophical Sciences G.V. Osipov, SSA vice president, reported on the international activities of the association. The report of SSA Auditing Commission Chairman N.G. Valentinova, candidate of philosophical sciences, and the reports by board members Doctor of Philosophical Sciences M.Kh. Titma on "Changes in the SSA Charter," Candidate of Philosophical Sciences V.G. Andreyenkov on "The Creation of an SSA All-Union Sociological Data Bank," and Doctor of Philosophical Sciences B.M. Firsov on "The Professional Code of Soviet Sociologists" aroused great interest.

One of the conference speakers was Academician G.I. Marchuk, present of the USSR Academy of Sciences. He stressed that the role of the science of sociology has grown perceptibly more important in recent years. Questions of methodology, social statistics, and research personnel requirements have become quite important. The time has come to form temporary research teams, establish broader international contacts, and make more extensive use of foreign experience in research methods and organization.

The official documents of the conference aroused lively debates. In addition, the delegates displayed great interest in the scientific report on "The Sociology of the Social Sphere," presented by Doctor of Philosophical Sciences V.N. Ivanov, director of the Institute of Sociological Research, USSR Academy of Sciences. In particular, he discussed the current projects of the collective of our country's main sociological establishment and listed the primary objectives of the academic sector of Soviet sociology.

By a conference decision, an all-union sociological data bank will be established in Moscow. The amended SSA Charter was approved. The "Professional Code of the Sociologist" was adopted. This was followed by elections to the association board and presidium. The new board elected T.I. Zaslavskaya president of the SSA at a plenary meeting. The elected vice presidents are V.N. Ivanov, B. V. Rakitskiy, Zh.T. Toshchenko, M.Kh. Titma, O.I. Shkaratan, and V.A. Yadov, and the chief academic secretary is V.S. Borovik.

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Socioeconomic Differentiation of Demographic Behavior

18060005o Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 126-127

[Report by O.D. Zakharova and M.A. Cherednichenko on regular session of Social Demography Section of Soviet Sociological Association]

[Text] A report on "Problems in the Elaboration of the Theory of the Socioeconomic Determination of Demographic Processes" was presented at a regular session of the Social Demography Section of the Soviet Sociological Association by Doctor of Economic Sciences L.L. Rybakovskiy (ISI [Institute of Sociological Research], USSR Academy of Sciences). The speaker analyzed three questions: What lies at the basis of the historical evolution of demographic development? What are the prospects and possibilities for the control of this development? What are the main regulators of demographic behavior? The proposed theory establishes a connection between the determination of demographic processes and the regulation of demographic behavior, between the factorial and behavioral approaches. Demographic processes are determined by two groups of factors, one of which is related to the distinctive features of the socioeconomic structure while the other is connected with the history of the society and its level of development. It is on the macrolevel that the social needs for population reproduction, migration, and distribution are formed, social goals are determined, and priorities are set with regard to their sequence and resource requirements.

An analysis of the evolution of demographic processes within the context of the historical alternation of socioeconomic structures differs fundamentally from the theory of "demographic revolution," in accordance with which the three types of production (archaic, agrarian, and industrial) correspond to three types of population reproduction: archaic, traditional, and modern. This leads, on the one hand, to the acknowledgement of identical causes, explaining the similarity of the parameters of demographic processes in, for example, the

capitalist and socialist societies—that is, to a certain degree of "demographic convergence"—and, on the other, to the substantiation of separate functional laws.

The examination of demographic processes within the context of the country's socioeconomic development, the evolution of the social system, and the growth of economic potential reveals the change of demographic behavioral norms not only during the transition from one socioeconomic structure to another, but also within the framework of a single structure at different levels of its maturity. This is an explanation for the differences in the tendencies and conditions of population reproduction and migration in the feudal, capitalist, and socialist societies, in the developed and developing countries, and in different parts of the USSR.

One of the reasons for the economic expediency of the large family in pre-reform Russia was that the peasant family represented the main production nucleus, in which children were equal to adults as workers. The large peasant family was capable, merely by virtue of the division of labor and cooperation among members, of producing a large combined product and, consequently, of securing a higher level of well-being than small or childless families.

Under capitalist conditions population reproduction underwent several significant changes, not only because social progress provided ways of combating the high death rate, but also and primarily because of the changing social needs for population reproduction. The loss of the family's productive function and of the economic independence of its members was only one of the causes of the evolution of family size norms. The main reason was that wealth in the capitalist society, measured in terms of capital, does not depend on the size of the population producing it, and this gives the dominant classes less incentive to stimulate a higher birthrate. The transformation of population reproduction in the capitalist society is a result of the production relations of this structure, namely the relations between hired labor and capital, in which wages, as a converted form of the value of manpower, represent the cost of manpower production and reproduction. An increase in the number of children with no change in wages reduces per capita income. Besides this, the relative importance of live labor declines. All of this lowers the family size norm. This is why many capitalist countries have encountered two problems: depopulation and unemployment. The social need for population reproduction in the capitalist society exists as long as capitalist production needs manpower.

The theory of the demographic revolution provides a fundamentally different explanation of the declining birthrate, going back to the earlier decline of the death rate and especially of the infant mortality rate. It is true that an examination of the dynamics of these processes reveals their parallel evolution, and this could suggest

the existence of a close relationship, but the time difference between the beginning and end of the transition to the new types of birthrate and death rate is due, in the speaker's opinion, to other causes. The improvement of the material conditions of life, the rising general and hygienic standards of the population, medical discoveries and other factors affect the death rate more quickly because no lengthy period of mental perception and interpretation is required. The struggle against mass epidemics and infections, contributing to the considerable rise in average life expectancy, is an impersonal struggle on a massive scale. A mass decline in the birthrate, on the other hand, requires changes in individual thinking and in the norms of reproductive behavior.

The socialist society has much more potential to manage all aspects of socioeconomic development, including the demographic aspect, but the historical conditions of the construction of socialism and limited resources have always dictated the need to establish strict priorities in the satisfaction of social needs, and population reproduction has never been a top priority. The need for labor resources has been satisfied by involving large segments of the unemployed population, primarily women, in the national economy. This has made the rapid accomplishment of a group of social, economic, political, and other tasks possible, but it has simultaneously led to radical changes in the social norms of demographic behavior (a decrease in family size, heightened mobility, etc.). Today these norms no longer correspond to social needs, but the state does not have enough resources in today's economic and political situation to establish the necessary material conditions to channel demographic behavior in the desired direction. One of the most important primary objectives is the planning of the optimal economic and demographic development of society within the context of the goal of guaranteed population growth.

Then L.L. Rybakovskiy went on to say that arguments about the effectiveness of various regulators of demographic behavior arise because of poorly elaborated theory, the lack of social statistics, and the absence of reliable sociological surveys. There is reason to believe that the degree of influence of regulators depends on the environment, the personality type, the social order, etc.

Although V.A. Borisov (ISI, USSR Academy of Sciences) agreed with the opinion regarding the socioeconomic determination of demographic processes, he expressed doubts about the possibility of influencing reproductive behavior by changing living conditions. In his opinion, it is a more significant fact that even the complete satisfaction of the contemporary need for children will not produce a birthrate high enough to secure simple population reproduction. Existing drawbacks are not confined to purely material problems that can be solved with relative ease; there is something like a "small family" culture and extremely negative feelings about medium-sized families, not to mention large ones with many children. The resolution of the latter problem will require the appropriate resources and radical reversals in public opinion.

Objecting to the denial of the self-regulating powers of the demographic system, Ye.M. Andreyev (Scientific Research Institute of the USSR Central Statistical Administration) stressed the need to consider the effects of the demographic past on the current demographic situation. In his opinion, the high birthrate was only a reaction to the high death rate—i.e., the only way of securing the functioning of the demographic system.

In the opinion of S.D. Zakharova (ISI, USSR Academy of Sciences), the effects of living conditions on demographic behavior should be regarded, on the one hand, as the influence of situational fluctuations modifying the time frame of the main behavioral stereotypes and, on the other, as fundamental, long-term changes connected with the restructuring of the entire way of life and the entire system of social norms in the sphere of demographic behavior. We have experience in this kind of restructuring. For example, there was the stage in the construction of socialism in our country when the change in social needs objectively promoted a decrease in family size. Today the norms of demographic behavior no longer correspond to the social need for population reproduction. In connection with this, one of the most important tasks of demographic science is the elaboration of a theory of demographic process management and the planning of demographic policy on this basis.

In his report, V.N. Arkhangelskiy (ISI, USSR Academy of Sciences) calculated the effects of possible and permissible changes in the demographic situation, particularly the maximum permissible decrease in population size, and expressed some observations on the strategy of demographic policy.

The discussion of the issues raised in L.L. Rybakovskiy's report will be continued at subsequent sessions of the Social Demography Section of the Soviet Sociological Association.

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Restructuring of Economic Mechanism and Social Control

18060005p Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 133-136

[Article by Yuriy Yevgenyevich Volkov, doctor of philosophical sciences, professor, department head at the Higher School of the Trade Union Movement imeni N.M. Shvernik, and regular contributor to our journal, and Sergey Petrovich Podvig, teaching assistant in the same department. This is his first article for our journal]

[Text] The fundamental improvement of the economic mechanism is a key link in socioeconomic acceleration. Although the current measures in this field are "addressed" primarily to the economy, they are closely

related to the social development of our society and therefore are naturally of interest to sociologists. For example, the introduction of new conditions of economic management is supposed to stimulate labor collectives and all workers to use their potential as completely and effectively as possible. This means that the economic mechanism can serve as the most important leverage in mobilizing the human factor. Current reforms are also having a profound effect on the sphere of distribution and on the living requirements, social qualities, and sociopolitical activity of people. In addition to all of this, the nature of social contacts and relations within the "society—labor collective—individual" system and the degree to which the principle of social justice is implemented depend largely on the economic mechanism. In turn, economic restructuring requires the intensification of the social factor, of all its elements and facets, because "the more massive the historic objectives, the more important it is for millions to take a proprietary interest in them and to participate responsibly, consciously, and enthusiastically in their attainment"[1, p 140].

The basic guidelines for the restructuring of the economic mechanism are already known and are stipulated in the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum, and several other recent party and state documents. In addition, the first important steps have been taken. In particular, a law on state enterprises (or associations) is now being compiled to reinforce the unity of fundamental planning and full economic accountability, independence and responsibility, and the new forms of self-management engendered by mass creativity in the activities of enterprises[2, p 26]. Some questions connected with the actual pursuit of these goals, however, are now being debated.

The books by G.Kh. Popov and O.I. Novikov[3; 4] we will examine in this article were published prior to the 27th CPSU Congress, but they are still relevant today. The authors tried to foresee possible responses to some controversial questions. After analyzing the development of our system of economic management in depth, G.Kh. Popov substantiates the principles of its effectiveness. O.I. Novikov clarifies these principles with regard to capital construction, making extensive use of data on the advantages of cost accounting as the chief principle of managerial activity.

The authors' common theoretical platform is a "model" of the economic mechanism based on a system of primarily economic methods of management. To avoid the misinterpretation of the position taken by G.Kh. Popov and O.I. Novikov (and by the authors of this article), we should immediately stress that neither they nor we have any doubts about the need for "a prevalence of centralized management and a subordinate system of production organizations and other links of the socialist production system with broader independence"[3, pp 306-307]. At the same time, the possibilities connected with the functioning of commodity and money relations

should be employed more quickly and completely. Their extensive development within a planned economy will not only create an effective system for the mobilization of labor but will also fully establish the main economic principle of socialism. It is time to surmount, as speakers at the 27th CPSU Congress said, "the prejudice against commodity and money relations and their underestimation in the practice of the planned management of the economy.... The healthy functioning of commodity and money relations on a socialist basis can create the kind of managerial situation and the kind of atmosphere in which the results of economic management will depend wholly on the quality of collective work and on the ability and initiative of managers"[1, pp 40-41].

The most important feature of the managerial mechanism proposed by the authors is the combination of the full economic accountability of enterprises (or associations) with the "economic accounting" of central agencies. This kind of system will aid in the establishment of "stimulating management"—i.e., will secure the self-regulation and self-development of all national production and each of its links. In other words, the transition from the directive plan (or plan-assignment) handed down from above, primarily through administrative methods, to planning based on the principle of mutual advantage (the plan-order) will result in the establishment of a flexible system of management. This system will be based on the material interest of all links of the economic mechanism and will therefore allow for the more efficient regulation of supply and demand and for the effective and timely satisfaction of national economic needs and the rising demands of the Soviet people.

Several of the ideas expressed by the authors are already reflected in the draft law on the state enterprise (or association). The document also contains some provisions, however, that conflict to some extent with the ideals of the economic independence of enterprises, full economic accountability, and the direct dependence of wages on profits. In particular, the recognition of the consumer as the "main judge" of the results of enterprise operations would seem to lead naturally to the compilation of the plan on the basis of contracts which, in turn, should be compiled on the basis of estimates and standard programs. The role of the direct economic relations of enterprises, however, is not fully reflected in the corresponding articles (10 and 15). There is also some inconsistency in the wording of Paragraph 5 of Article 10 on the indicators set by superior state agencies. What are these indicators and why are they necessary if the desire for higher profits within the context of contract obligations, regulated by scientifically sound pricing practices and long-range norms, is to serve as an effective regulator of enterprise activity? The draft also contains some obsolete, declarative provisions, obligating the enterprise to step up the circulation of working capital (Art 4), make fuller use of production capacities (Art 3), secure the priority development of its own research base (Art 11), reduce proportional funds for the maintenance of

managerial personnel (Art 14), etc. Besides this, the limitations imposed on the wage fund (Art 3) and on its use (Art 14) are hardly justified.

We feel that further work on the draft law should be geared to the firm establishment of full economic accountability combined with expanded and direct democracy. Only this can secure, on the one hand, the fuller implementation of the socialist principle of remuneration according to labor and, on the other, the expansion of the rights and autonomy of enterprises and associations, heightened interest in highly efficient work of good quality, and the necessary conditions and incentives for the display of creative activity by people and for their total participation in management.

In his analysis of incentives, G.Kh. Popov makes the accurate observation that "in the present system of wages, where most of the salary is essentially established centrally and guaranteed centrally, the concrete results of labor are not taken into account sufficiently.... Furthermore, the results of the labor are not the actual dimensions of what has been accomplished, but the degree of fulfillment of the assignment, the norm, etc. This is how the danger of payments 'uncovered' by results arises"[3, p 88]. This problem has another equally important aspect. Shortcomings in the system of wages and incentives inhibit the workers' efforts to reach a higher level of technical sophistication, improve their skills, incorporate new equipment and technology, conserve resources, seek production reserves, etc. And this is a matter of substantial "social losses." In this connection, we must agree with G.Kh. Popov that "changes in the system of wages should be the first step in the restructuring of the mechanism for the economic mobilization of labor"[*ibid.*, p 89].

The author bases his program, which is supposed to secure the more thorough enactment of socialist distribution according to labor, on three principles. First of all, the correlation between the guaranteed part of the wage and the part calculated according to the results of labor should be changed; the former should be the reasonable necessary minimum, and the latter should have a capacity for "potential growth" and should depend ultimately on the results of enterprise activity. Furthermore, wages should be paid according to the actual product and, consequently, according to the percentage accounted for by the labor of each individual in the final results of collective work. Finally, the collective should distribute the portion of the final product it has earned according to the criteria it has set[*ibid.*, pp 89-91].

In principle, there is no question that this is a fair approach. Many social issues, however, require thorough analysis. This was the subject of special discussion at the January (1987) CPSU Central Committee Plenum[2, pp 8-10]. Above all, we must realize that these changes in the system of wages will lead unavoidably to larger—and probably substantially larger—differences in the income

of workers. This process seems to be unavoidable and it seems to conform to socialist justice under present conditions, but there will be serious problems—both theoretical and practical—in this area. There are still unanswered questions about the wages of the rapidly growing category of workers in the non-production sphere. Obviously, some kind of "common denominator" must be found so that the situation in different sectors of the national economy can be taken into account. Differences in income will also affect public consumption funds. The authors only mention this issue in passing. The incorporation of the new economic mechanism, however, will lead unavoidably to the quicker growth of the funds of some enterprises. How will this affect distribution according to labor and social relations in general? We must give some thought to this now, just as to the freeing of workers as a result of full economic accountability. G.Kh. Popov makes some interesting observations with regard to their subsequent placement in jobs[3, pp 95-97]. His remarks, however, are closer to a fuller explanation of the question than to an answer.

This will also give rise to several problems of a general nature. Above all, there will be problems in the relationship between spiritual and physical needs. This is far from a constant relationship. For example, one of these books says that "the fuller satisfaction of physical needs heightens the importance of spiritual needs in the individual's life. And the latter could change the economic structure"[*ibid.*, p 309]. This statement implies that the resolution of the contradiction revealed by the author will not require any conscious effort. Of course, this is far from true.

As O.I. Novikov correctly observes, partial economic accountability "encourages enterprises to transfer their economic responsibility to the state and its central agencies. The result is excessive centralization. The self-regulation of the economic system is minimized. This is probably the reason for the growth of the administrative staff and the cases of inertia in national economic management"[4, p 210]. The author does not confine himself to this conclusion and points to one possible way of making the transition to full economic accountability—through the calculation of socially necessary expenditures of labor and the introduction of a standard price plan. The actual practice of full economic accountability has several important social implications. It engenders genuine collective responsibility for the results of labor, a common interest in the growth of the volume of products and service and their improvement of their quality, and the prerequisites for the cohesion of the collective, the reinforcement of discipline and order, and the reduction of idle time, defective goods, overtime work, and personnel turnover. In short, it engenders a proprietary attitude in workers. Furthermore, as P.G. Bunich pointed out, this is not simply a matter of more intensive participation by workers in management, but of a "new type" of management. It ceases to be an

unforeseen function and "becomes an immediate functional obligation for each worker; it ceases to be a purely social matter devoid of financial interest and becomes a social and material concern; it ceases to be non-professional and becomes increasingly professional; it ceases to be something practiced after hours and becomes part of the labor process and the foundation of this process"[5].

The transition to primarily economic methods of management and the introduction of full economic accountability will naturally raise questions about the place and role of central organs. A qualitatively new approach to centralized management is substantiated in the model proposed by the authors. This approach would reduce its intervention in routine managerial operations and assign broader rights and autonomy to basic production links. At the same time, the center should play a much more important role in major long-range decisions on matters of capital investment and scientific and technical progress in line with economically effective patterns. A system of economic norms and long-range centralized programs should serve as the basis for the coordination of the interests of both sides[3, pp 192-201]. The center should secure the implementation of the Leninist principle of the priority of politics over economics. The center will play the deciding role in such cardinal matters as the acceleration of scientific and technical progress, the development of productive forces, the changes in their sectorial and territorial proportions, the enhancement of public well-being, the improvement of the way of life, the use of natural resources, the protection of the environment, participation in socialist economic integration and in international division of labor, and the improvement of the administrative mechanism. The changes in the tasks and functions of centralized management will establish important prerequisites and necessitate heightened democracy on all levels of management.

Finally, what is the strategy for the transition to the new system of economic management? As G.Kh. Popov correctly stresses, the answer calls for a choice between "either the gradual modification of the current system for the constant reinforcement of economic methods (we began this process in 1965) or decisive, radical, and quick restructuring to the same end"[ibid., p 320]. Judging by all indications, radical restructuring and the accelerated development of the system of economic management will have the greatest impact.

Now that we have directed the reader's attention to these books in which several important aspects of current reforms are economically substantiated and now that we have analyzed the first practical steps in this direction, we would like to say a few words about the science of sociology. It is easy to see that restructuring will affect the social sphere as much as the economy. We could even say that the new economic mechanism will influence the economy primarily by mobilizing social factors. The scales of these processes are gradually expanding, and their analysis could be the most important field of

research today. In general, the new mechanism will have a favorable effect on the social sphere. It will create favorable conditions for heightened activity by workers, the satisfaction of their vital needs, and the formation and development of the best social qualities in people. As the restructuring progresses, problems could arise, and the science of sociology must study them in depth and in their entirety and, what is most important, it must do this quickly and efficiently and solve them on the theoretical level.

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Socioeconomic Factors of Mounting Labor Enthusiasm of Workers at Republic Industrial Enterprises

18060005q Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87 (signed to press 7 May 87) pp 137-139

[Review by N.M. Gutlyyeva of book "Sotsialno-ekonomicheskiye faktory rosta trudovoy aktivnosti rabochikh promyshlennykh predpriyatiy respubliki" by M.A. Atadzhanova, Ashkhabad, Ylym, 1985, 132 pages]

[Text] Today there is a distinct current of "middle-of-the-road" publications in sociology. There are no obvious omissions or glaring errors in them, but there are not any original discoveries or interesting ideas either. Standardization has entered the science of sociology and has taken the form of a conveyor belt producing dull products with no distinguishing features. Therefore, we are not dealing with an exception to the rule, but with a definite standard in sociological thinking.

"This work was intended," the author of the subject of this review writes, "to answer some theoretical and procedural questions connected with the study of real changes in social activity and the analysis of the general conditions contributing to an active position on current events on this basis" (p 6). Let us see how new and valid these answers are, in view of the fact that we are dealing here with the most massive sociological study conducted in the Central Asian region. For the last decade and a half there has been no rise in labor productivity in the republic and negative tendencies in patterns of employment and distribution have grown more pronounced, and this has naturally caused the stagnation of labor enthusiasm. There is no mention of this, however, in this work. On the contrary, sociological methods are used here to paint a false picture of well-being, which has nothing in common with the real problems the laboring public is facing in the republic.

First of all, what does labor enthusiasm mean? The author writes: "The labor enthusiasm of the laboring public is a new form of social activity that is present only in the socialist society" (p 5). Further on in the book, however, the indicators of labor enthusiasm include the fulfillment and overfulfillment of production assignments, the observance of discipline, the improvement of skills, etc. (p 31). But after all, labor enthusiasm is present in these forms in non-socialist structures as well. It would be more accurate to speak of the new quality of labor enthusiasm under socialism instead of groundlessly denying the existence of labor enthusiasm in the capitalist society. Apparently, some kind of profound theoretical "point" is being made here, but is it correct to completely ignore the actual state of affairs? If nothing else, capitalism is quite proficient in stimulating labor enthusiasm.

The text is a perfect example of sociology's characteristic "middle-of-the-road" striving for the kind of scientific novelty that cannot provide an excuse to doubt the author's trustworthiness while appearing to be "something new" in science. The only solution is a pseudotheoretical verbal tightrope act. The genre itself is not a simple one and we must say that M.A. Atadzhanova has not mastered all of the tricky phrases of the social science bureaucrats. Let us take a look at this paragraph: "The program for the encouragement and development of social activity must be based on a thorough knowledge of actual conditions and the augmentation of the objective and subjective factors contributing to the enhancement and elimination of situations impeding its development" (p 6). What does this say? We must simultaneously enhance and eliminate the "situations" impeding the development of social activity. This goes beyond the bounds of intelligent criticism.

The same kind of "novelty" is also present in the statements on procedural matters where the author seems to confuse the words "object" and "subject." Let us look at the following statement: "The subject of sociological research can be the social group or class or

the society as a whole, and the unit of observation and study is the individual belonging to the subject of the larger social entity" (p 57). Obviously, there is not a single sociological research project that has been conducted by a class or by the society as a whole. The author conducts research (and he is also the subject) and is responsible to the social group, the class, and the society as a whole for his conclusions. Even if the society as a whole could someday be the subject of sociological research, how could the unit of observation be an individual belonging to a "larger social entity"? What kind of "social entity" can be "larger" than the society?

The author's procedural work, particularly her new idea about the measurement of labor motives, will seem interesting to sociologists. The procedure follows this pattern: The respondent is asked whether he agrees with statements like "Labor is the main source of social development" (p 68). If he agrees, the author concludes, this is a motive for labor. The book says that "these assertions indicate social significance, but they also reflect a personal view of labor as something of moral value" (pp 68-69). It is indicative that all of this is the verbal setting for the extremely sound "Correlative Matrix of Elements of the Empirical Model of Beliefs in Labor as a Vital Necessity for Workers in the Processing Industry of the Turkmen SSR" (ibid.). The following statement by M.A. Atadzhanova is one of her procedural "achievements" "I would like to demonstrate the real potential of regressive analysis in the study of the statistical value of the main elements of an active position on current events" (p 59). Unfortunately, something kept the author from "demonstrating the real potential," or perhaps this part of the manuscript was lost. There is no further mention of this in the text.

Here are a few observations on the interpretation of empirical materials. For example, the correlation between the level of social activity and the size of the wage serves as the basis for M.A. Atadzhanova's conclusion that "the sociopolitical activity...of laborers...is augmented considerably...as their wages...increase" (p 97). If this were true, the encouragement of heightened sociopolitical activity would be an extremely simple matter. An increase in wages would do the trick. It is most likely that the correlation does not reflect a cause-and-effect relationship between these variables.

The legacy of the founders of Marxism-Leninism and party documents are put to vigorous use in the book, and this is an indisputably positive feature. Sometimes, however, the author gives quotations her own unique interpretation. For example, she quotes a passage from a work by V.I. Lenin: "The Russian Soviet Republic...has...colossal reserves of ore (in the Urals), fuel in West Siberia (coal), in the Caucasus and the southeast (oil), and in the center (peat), colossal wealth in forests, hydraulic power, raw materials for the chemical industry (Karabugaz), and so forth." The quotation is followed by the author's comment: "The use of all these reserves would be more effective if socialist competition could be developed everywhere" (pp 110-111).

Further on in the work a quotation from the documents of the June (1983) CPSU Central Committee Plenum: "The unjustified squandering of resources, the disparities in plans, and the gap between the supply of goods and public income....," is followed by the author's conclusion: "These are the general objective factors contributing to an active position on current events in the socialist society" (p 54).

I will conclude with a few words about the level of editing and publishing work. Figures are frequently cited in the book, but their origins are unknown. Some data are cited twice—for example, on pages 40 and 105 and on pages 37 and 99. The same text is used twice—the first and second paragraphs on page 107 are an almost complete repetition of the fourth paragraph on page 120. Sometimes repetitions are "disguised"—data for 1 year are cited on page 37, and on page 104 the same indicators apply to the entire five-year plan, and this is not justified by the context. Percentages are cited on page 37, and the absolute values of the same data are cited on page 99. This suggests that the book had to be padded to meet specific length requirements.

Today the science of sociology needs criticism more than ever before. Most reviews, however, are complimentary. The party teaches us to call a spade a spade and to fight a bold and uncompromising battle against shortcomings, but I have important personal reasons to keep my name and place of employment secret. I will only say that I am also from the Turkmen SSR, but my statements will be easy to check—opening the book is all it will take. I have to sign this review with a pseudonym.

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Population of Yerevan. Ethnosociological Studies
18060005r Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 139-140

[Review by I.A. Grishayev of book "Naseleniye Yerevana. Etnosotsiologicheskoye issledovaniya," edited by Yu.V. Arutyunyan and E.T. Karapetyan, Yerevan, Izd-vo AN Arm.SSR, 1986, 250 pages]

[Text] The work performed by Armenian ethnographers within the framework of the all-union program for "The Optimization of the Sociocultural Conditions of the Development and Convergence of Nationalities in the USSR"[1] has much in common with similar studies in other republics in terms of its methods, structure, and principles of data analysis[2]. The authors' discussion of little-studied ethnosociological problems and their wealth of documented information, however, make this work particularly valuable.

Yerevan, where 30.7 percent of the inhabitants of Armenia live, is distinguished from all other capitals of union republics in the USSR by the mononational composition of its population, its high growth rates, its large share of the urban population and total population of the republic, and the distinctive features of its formation (p 15). The mononational population of the Armenian capital allows the authors to demonstrate that general trends in sociocultural development are determined primarily by global economic, social, and political factors common to all of the republics in our country. This is attested to by the evolution of the socioprofessional structure of the city, the convergence of the cultural levels and ways of life of various population groups, the democratization of relations within the family, and other factors. Therefore, the authors conclude, the mononational environment does not impede the thorough assimilation of the cultural wealth of the entire union and it does stimulate a lively interest in the life of other nationalities in the USSR. The study reaffirms the priority of social factors over ethnic ones in the contemporary development of Soviet nationalities.

It goes without saying that this conclusion does not detract in the slightest from the uniqueness of the Armenian traditions and cultural heritage that lend national color to social processes. The authors of the book are professional ethnographers and they made extensive use of ethnographic and historical material in addition to public statistics and sociological data in their study of the ethnic aspect of Yerevan's development.

During the years of Soviet rule the population of Yerevan has increased 20-fold and now exceeds 1 million. It is composed primarily of migrants representing different branches of the Armenian ethnic group. In this study the migrants were divided into the following groups: rural migrants, urban migrants from Armenia, migrants from other republics in the USSR, and repatriates. This principle turned out to be extremely productive in the analysis of sociocultural processes, because there were differences in the behavior of each of these groups and these differences influenced the formation of the sociodemographic composition of the population and its way of life.

In addition to analyzing the social structure of the population, the authors tried to gauge the stability of traditional relations and standards of behavior in different groups of the city's population and to determine the balance of traditional and modern features and of national and international elements in their everyday life and culture. This was done with the aid of such cultural and personal characteristics as relationships with relatives, neighbors, countrymen, and friends, traditions, standards of behavior, the appreciation of culture—national and international, and the intermarriage of different population groups.

Some results confirm the conclusions of earlier studies (for example, the standardizing effect of the urban culture on the behavior of migrants, the disappearance of

sociocultural differences between young members of socioprofessional groups, etc.), while others provide new information. The latter include data on the dependence of the migrant's urban lifestyle and his inclination to change jobs on the length of time he has lived in a new place. Family ties and contacts with countrymen and neighbors play an extremely important role, especially for the elderly, during the initial period of urban life, far exceeding the role of relations with co-workers.

Incidentally, family ties play an important role during all periods of the life of Yerevan's inhabitants. One of the best sections of the book analyzes the family and clearly demonstrates the superiority of combining quantitative methods of data analysis with thorough ethnographic interpretations. In addition to the general trends in family development that are common to all capital cities—the simplification of the family's composition, the democratization of relations, and the change in the role of women in the family—there are also some specific features that are characteristic of contemporary Armenia. For example, there is a relatively higher percentage of compound families, complete families outnumber broken homes, extended families outnumber conjugal families, and there are relatively few unmarried adults and childless couples. In the sphere of family relations, the traditional stereotype is reflected in the tenacity of the patriarchal framework, although it is often only a matter of form (particularly in the families of people engaged in mental labor) and in the traditional division of housework on the basis of age and gender.

The authors examine the interaction of traditional and modern features and of national and international factors in family relations and everyday life, as well as in patterns of cultural consumption, the marriage rite, and some facets of the national mentality. It is extremely indicative that the mononational composition of Yerevan's population has not resulted in cultural isolation. For example, in spite of the fact that Armenian authors are the most popular with readers in Yerevan, Russian and foreign writers are also quite popular (p 107); the most popular of the many types of weddings are two types of almost equal significance—traditional and modern (p 196); finally, the number of positive characteristics ascribed by respondents to Armenians (80 percent), Georgians (almost the same number), and Russians (85.5 percent) indicates the absence of ethnic biases (p 206). These examples attest to the need for a more thorough than usual interpretation of the effects of the ethnic composition of the population on cultural interests. They are described and analyzed in the last section of the book. The data cited here on the use of free time by the city's inhabitants confirm the validity of the general conclusions.

I would like to also say a few words of criticism. For example, it is difficult to agree with the authors that free time should be strictly regulated and that individual forms of cultural activity should be under constant public control (p 231). This is precisely why the title of

the section, "Regulated Free Time and Its Role in the Thorough Development of the Individual," seems inaccurate. Unfortunately, the stylistic and semantic errors in the book sometimes make the text difficult to understand. It is not always expedient to break down data according to the sex, age, and socioprofessional status of the respondents. Furthermore, the very interpretation of these data is not always convincing. All of this testifies that the authors sometimes asked less of themselves than they should have, and that the editors asked less of the authors than they should have.

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Family as Object of Demography

18060005s Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 141-142

[Review by N.I. Kungurova of book "Semya—obyekt demografii" by A.G. Volkov, Moscow, Mysl, 1986, 270 pages]

[Text] This new book by the renowned Soviet demographer, just as all of his other works, is distinguished by a logical narrative and a carefully planned structure. Beginning with theoretical premises and a summary of different approaches to the study of family and marital relations, the author introduces a term that has never been used in our literature to date—the "demographic function of the family." The elements making it up are not only the reproductive function, but also the functions of socialization, sexual regulation, and self-preservation (pp 17-18). In this way, by suggesting the need to study both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of population reproduction from the very beginning, A.G. Volkov goes on to analyze problems in the statistical records of families from this standpoint and traces

common tendencies toward change in the family structure of the USSR and the differences found in various republics and in urban and rural communities. The following chapters deal with the problems of creating and dissolving a marriage (in a demographic cross-section) and questions connected with the changing status of marriage and the family. In the last chapter the author expresses his views on demographic policy with regard to the family. The book ends with a list of recommended Soviet and foreign literature for specialists in family sociology and demography.

The extremely interesting statistical information illustrating the dynamics of the family structure, marriage and divorce trends, and different phases in the life cycle of the family; the careful selection and summarization of 1970 and 1979 census data and the data of other studies of the demographic aspect of family development; the description of the principles governing the consideration of various indicators reflecting family living patterns as units of statistical and demographic records—all of this gives the book the features of a sound reference work.

We have already mentioned the newly coined term "demographic function of the family." There are many such discoveries and new approaches in the monograph. For example, A.G. Volkov proposes an interesting system for the demographic classification of families (pp 43-45), consisting of 12 categories reflecting all of the phases of the family's life cycle from the standpoint of composition. The author does not classify families according to the existence of children but bases his categories on the principle of "complexity" (the number of complete and incomplete family nuclei). This system of classification could be used in sociological, sociopsychological, and economic research. It could be quite important in studies of the process of nuclearization, especially now that the process is growing stronger and we have virtually no statistical records of it. The results of a survey of young families, conducted under the author's supervision in 1984 to investigate changes in the family status of young couples, are interesting in this connection. It was learned that the overwhelming majority of young families choose to live separately from their parents but still feel the need to maintain contact with them (pp 195-225). The author does not confine himself to the summarization of data and the ascertainment of facts. He examines questions connected with statistical records of family fragmentation, proposes the use of a demographic grid to calculate young family separation indicators for real and hypothetical age groups, and reveals the dependence of these coefficients on the duration of the marriage (pp 206-217).

An analysis of demographic statistics for real and hypothetical generations indicates that this process reaches its peak in the second and third years of married life. Within the first 10 years of marriage around 59 percent of all young couples take up residence separate from their parents and around 16 percent break up (p 216).

Another interesting and previously undisclosed fact concerns the frequency of divorces in first and subsequent marriages. A comparison of standard divorce rate coefficients indicates that the rate of dissolution is much higher (by 75 percent) in subsequent marriages. The author does not try to explain this phenomenon. It is possible that comprehensive studies by demographers and specialists in family sociology will be of help in this area. The interdisciplinary approach is also necessary in studies of the higher death rate among the widowed. In the author's words, the reasons for this are still a blank in family demography. Demographers should unite their efforts with sociologists and psychologists in this field.

Some of the other interesting topics discussed in the book are the methods of studying ethnically mixed marriages (the author feels that these should be recorded in the next census) and the analysis of marital status and mortality. The combination table A.G. Volkov proposes of marriages terminated by the death of one spouse or by divorce might serve as the first step in the construction of a single table reflecting all phases of family functioning and development and all processes and phenomena affecting marital and family relations.

This book by A.G. Volkov, who is such a respected researcher, can be described as faultless in its discussions of family statistics, but the interpretation of some socioeconomic family problems seems invalid to us. The author points to the disappearance of the inheritance of private property in the socialist society, but this is occurring naturally and automatically because this kind of property is alien to socialism. The inheritance of personal property, however, is still present in the socialist society, and this warrants mention to avoid creating the impression that there is no transfer of property at all under socialism.

In our opinion, the assertion that primary socialization takes place mainly in social establishments and that the economic, material, and administrative functions of the contemporary family are secondary to personal relations devoid of mercenary and materialistic considerations also seems incorrect (p 243). Here the author is not only clearly contradicting his own definition of the demographic function of the family at the beginning of the book, but is also underestimating the research findings attesting that the primary socialization of the individual from birth to the age of 3 should take place in the family, because even the best pre-school establishments are no substitute for the child's mother and father. Furthermore, the raising of children presupposes expenditures of time and money on the satisfaction of their material and spiritual needs. This fact alone testifies that the economic function of the family is still one of its most important functions.

These defects do not diminish our general favorable impression of the book. As a statistician, A.G. Volkov is

always in top form. The wealth of documented information, the thorough and logical analysis, the sound conclusions and practical recommendations will be of indisputable interest to the demographer and the specialist in family sociology.

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Vicious Circle: Sociopsychological Aspects of Shortages

18060005t Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 146-148

[Review by M.D. Popov of book "Ordogi kor. A hiány szociálpszichológiája" by K. Varga, Budapest, Magveto, 1985, 158 pages (in Hungarian)]

[Text] This book by Hungarian economist and sociologist K. Varga was written at the request of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). It will be of indisputable interest to economists and top-level administrators and to the immediate organizers of production, sociologists, and psychologists. To some extent, it will also provide a better understanding of current processes in all spheres of life in the Soviet society. Varga analyzes the results of studies, group tests, and experiments conducted in Hungary and other countries to investigate the problem of shortages. He discusses the book by his countryman J. Kornai, "Shortage" (it was published in 1982 and became quite popular in Hungary and abroad), at length. Kornai attempted to analyze the shortage as a sociopsychological problem as well as an economic one.

Why is it that an economy with limited resources suffers not only from limited human resources, which can be measured by the degree of professional training, experience, educational and cultural level, and business qualities, but also from a shortage of everything needed to put all of these factors in motion? In other words, why is there a shortage of the desire to work better and to find more effective solutions and of the ability to cooperate for a common cause? The author asks these questions and then quotes Kornai's statement that shortages at enterprises have immediate "material" and negative "spiritual" implications. The producer is not a computer, but a living being with a sensitive nervous system. Immediate adaptation to shortages through the strict adherence to technological plans or through flexibility can cause nervous tension, conflicts, and stress. More frequent incidents involving limited resources compound the stress and coping with these incidents uses up the time and energy needed for the improvement of technology and product quality.

After noting that resource limitations include a creative approach to work, a businesslike manner, an ability to resolve or neutralize conflicts, ingenuity, and zeal as well as stocks of crude resources, semimanufactured goods, and serviceable machinery and equipment, Varga asks a valid question: Who is capable of objectively calculating the shortage of these qualities or, in other words, of labor enthusiasm?

Plans are frequently frustrated not only by the passivity of executors and by their inability or reluctance to overcome difficulties, but also by the inability of managerial personnel to mobilize people for the implementation of ideas and the incorporation of innovations in the vested interests of the collective. These managers frequently justify themselves and explain unsatisfactory situations by reducing the entire shortage of commodities exclusively to a shortage of labor discipline.

The obsession with gross indicators is the "twin" of the shortage. Commenting on Kornai's statement that the shortage acts as a signal and stimulates production growth but also undermines effectiveness and thereby restrains this growth, Varga points to a vicious circle ("the paradox of the effectiveness of the economy suffering from shortages"): The shortage leads to an obsession with gross indicators, which leads to a higher demand for crude resources and materials, which leads to a more serious shortage.

The problem of incorporating past experience is also discussed in the book. The author mentions the need to act according to the so-called two-channel system, consisting essentially in learning from mistakes. When mistakes and failures are ignored, there is a shortage of information about important problems and a surplus of information about routine and secondary matters. In these cases the manager and the members of the collective have an unwritten agreement: The former does not like to hear facts contradicting his beliefs, and the latter refrain from telling him anything that might spoil his mood. Sometimes even extremely experienced and skilled managers cannot broaden the scope of their "understanding" or acknowledge its limitations as one of the underlying causes of error. Surmounting the errors that might be engendered by unquestioned authority, however, is an essential condition for the correction of a shortage of "past experience" and a prerequisite for the reorganization and development of the administrative system.

Summing up the results of his analysis, the author arrives at an extremely valid, in our opinion, conclusion: The main reason for chronic shortages can be found not in the financial sphere or in the pricing system, but in the prevailing atmosphere in establishments and the behavior it dictates in the managers responsible for economic decisionmaking. These conditions, norms, and behavioral standards are not eternal and can be modified by conscious human effort. In this connection, Varga

repeatedly underscores the importance of sociopsychological studies of shortages. In his opinion, research projects connected with the improvement of the organizational structure can reveal information about trends that could reduce the shortage of human resources and thereby alleviate the negative effects of shortages of all other resources. Considerable experience in this field has been accumulated in Hungary on the enterprise level and the national economic level. Unfortunately, the author does not illustrate his theoretical assumptions and findings with specific examples, and this is one of the book's indisputable shortcomings.

We will conclude this review with a brief excerpt from the monograph which seems quite relevant to us. "The innovative resolution of problems (and even their ingenious consideration) necessitates changes in attitudes and the way of thinking. Our utopian illusions stem from our hope of striking the spark of new ideas from the flint of managers who think and act in the old ways. The metaphor of the mill horse (continuously moving around the circle even after the threshing has been completed) served as an eloquent description for the problems we faced repeatedly. People responsible for dealing with problems should reassess their abilities and even the related system of motives and values. Errors should be sought simultaneously in two spheres—not only in the objective system of phenomena awaiting reform, but also in oneself, in one's own patterns of behavior."

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Effectiveness of Mass News Media

18060005u Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 148-149

[Review by B.Z. Doktorov of book "Effektivnost sredstv massovoy informatsii," edited by G.P. Davidyuk and V.S. Korobeynikov, Minsk, Nauka i tekhnika, 1986, 157 pages]

[Text] A professional and thorough analysis, academically sound theoretical and methodological clarification, and intelligent interpretations of empirical information—these are the main features of this monograph, based primarily on the results of studies conducted in Belorussia. The work reflects the analytical and empirical experience of republic sociologists, but the discussion of matters pertaining to the effectiveness of the mass news media is not confined to the traditions of a single school of research. Scientists from Moscow, Leningrad, and Tartu joined Belorussian authors in the discussion of the topic and especially in the investigation of its methodological aspects. This gives the reader a chance to hear different points of view.

It is probable that only two facts seem indisputable to the majority of researchers. The first concerns the leading, integral criterion of the effectiveness of the mass media—the degree of public political awareness and labor activity; the second concerns the fundamental method of measuring effectiveness or assessing it in quantitative terms. In the most general terms, this boils down to defining the goals and effects of mass informational processes. The relationship between these constitutes the degree of effectiveness. In all other respects, because the authors (G.P. Davidyuk, V.S. Korobeynikov, Ye.P. Prokhorov, and B.M. Firsov) concentrate on different areas of mass media activity and focus on different problems, their analytical interpretations bear visible signs of originality and diversity.

The most important thing about the book, its most significant achievement, is, in our opinion, the successful attempt to explain the complex, multileveled, and comprehensive nature of the concept of media effectiveness. Various investigative approaches which sometimes seemed mutually exclusive until recently, have converged and are intersupplementary. This is not a case of compromise, but of a realization of the "natural" multidimensional appearance of the problem itself and of its possible solutions. All of the theoretical and empirical research accumulated in this field seems to indicate the possibility of establishing a single theory of media effectiveness.

The theoretical arguments and conclusions in the book are based on studies conducted in the late 1970's and early 1980's, and it is extremely significant that the complexity of intensive processes in the activity of mass informational have been recorded in addition to successes in the extensive development of the media—the increasing scales of television and radio broadcasting, the impressive rise of press circulation figures, the growing audience, etc. The authors mention, in particular, the inordinate informational redundancy; the inadequate reflection of the interests and needs of certain population groups in the media; the limited scope of subject matter and the repeated coverage of the same aspects of life; the low level of efficiency; the stereotyped thinking of journalists; the perceptible lack of correspondence between the model of social activity suggested by newsmen and the immediate social experience of the audience, etc. A thorough analysis of empirical information about the content of mass information and audience characteristics and a study of the communicative behavior of the population revealed several general trends attesting to the futility of many elements of extensive media development. In O.T. Manayev's opinion, for example, the continued quantitative growth of news and propaganda capacities in the current informational situation will not increase the influence of the press, radio, and television on the labor and social activity of the population to any considerable extent. The intensive nature of media development is also consistently defended in the proposed program for the enhancement of their effectiveness (Ye.M. Babosov).

The contents of the book reveal the differing degrees to which various subsystems of the mass media have been studied by Soviet sociologists. Most of the studies concentrate on the audience. The next in line in terms of the level of scientific explanation, the state of the research methods employed, and the completeness and variety of relevant empirical information is the content of communication channels, the next is the communicator, or journalist, and the last is the publisher. The amount of research devoted to the last element of the mass media system is clearly inadequate.

There is a kind of "cliche" coverage of publishing activity: a chronological list of major party documents stipulating the fundamental principles governing the work of the press, radio, and television; a list of party guidelines for news and propaganda media; a description of the composition of the news team and of ways of improving team qualifications; an analysis of data on the development of technical equipment and audience growth. There is no mention of the reasons for frequent failures to comply with sound theoretical instructions and no analysis of the following questions: Why are the mass media unable to perform all of their assigned functions and what are the reasons for the suppression of criticism, the support of local interests, and the significant "distance" between the model of social reality described in the media and the daily production and social experience of people? Unfortunately, the authors of this work have chosen precisely the former, now canonical method of describing the publisher's role in enhancing media effectiveness (G.M. Kononov), but after all, rich experience has been accumulated in Belorussia in cooperation by party organs, journalists, and sociologists in improving the functioning of the entire news and propaganda system, and a network of ideological motivation, encompassing a huge audience, has been established. It is obvious—and this is confirmed by the contents of this book—that researchers of mass informational processes should begin concentrating on the publisher's role soon. The improvement of media activity will be impossible without this.

The sociological community has paid considerable attention to the nature of sociological rhetoric in recent years: There has been conceptual and terminological development and there have been productive, in our opinion, attempts to combine the academic style with the language of the journalist. Unfortunately, the authors of this monograph, many of whom are known as strong polemicists, are not supporting this trend: The narrative is traditional, and even monotonous in some sections.

Today much is being said about the voluntarism of editors, the increasing number of dilettantes involved in the management of the mass media, the bureaucratism, the tendency to overdramatize events, the inability to interpret public opinion, etc. Sociologists have paid too little attention to these phenomena, and there are no sound scientific analyses of them. Assessing the book as a whole, we can say that the researchers of the mass

media are methodologically, procedurally, and organizationally prepared to take on the new and revolutionary tasks facing our society, but it will necessitate the restructuring of their own way of thinking and greater civic determination.

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Sociologist's Bookshelf

18060005v Moscow SOTSILOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87) pp 155-156

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JPRS-USS-88-001
10 February 1988

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Publication Data

*18060005w Moscow SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE
ISSLEDOVANIYA in Russian No 3, May-Jun 87
(signed to press 7 May 87)*

English title: SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES

Russian title: SOTSIOLOGICHESKIYE ISSLEDOVA-
NIYA

Editor: A.G. Kharchev

Publishing house: Izdatelstvo Nauka

Place of publication: Moscow

Date of publication: May-June 1987

Signed to press: 7 May 1987

Copies: 10273

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kiye issledovaniya", 1987 8588

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